REMARKS

UPON THE

HISTORY of the LIFE

OF

REGINALD POLE.

By EDWARD STONE, Clerk, A.M.
And late Fellow of Wadham College, Oxford.

The SECOND EDITION,
Reviſed, Corrected, and Enlarged.

Out of thy own Mouth will I judge thee, Thou wicked Servant.
LUKE xix. 22.

——— Videt Hunc omnis Domus, et Vicinia tota
Introrſum Turpem, Formoſum Pelle decorâ.
HOR. Lib. I. Epiſ. xvi.

OXFORD,
PRINTED BY W. JACKSON,
For J. FLETCHER, in the Turle; and J. FLETCHER, in St. Paul's Church-yard, LONDON.
M.DCC.LXVI.

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TO THE

HON. AND RIGHT REVEREND

RICHARD,

LORD BISHOP OF DURHAM.

My Lord,

SINCERE endeavours, however indifferently executed, to vindicate the Reformation, and the noble and reverend perſons who promoted it, from the virulent invectives with which they have been aſperſed by a profeſſed Papiſt, and to expoſe the groſs corruptions of the Church of Rome, are the only merits I can lay claim to; and the ſole apology I can pretend to make, for taking this liberty of dedicating theſe Letters to your

Lordſhip, and imploring your protection of them. Theſe, My Lord, are impertinences, which your high eccleſiaſtical ſtation, your inviolable attachment to the Proteſtant Religion, and your well known candour and condeſcenſion to all mankind, neceſſarily ſubject you to; and which I flatter myſelf will be excuſed in me, for the ſake of the Cauſe I have undertaken to defend: And though it deſerves an infinitely better advocate, and I have fallen far ſhort of doing it juſtice, yet I ſhall always eſteem it an honour to have pleaded in its behalf; and be proud of ſo favourable an opportunity of ſubſcribing myſelf,

Your LORDSHIP'*s moſt dutiful,*

And moſt devoted humble Servant,

EDWARD STONE.

THE

PREFACE

To the READER.

THESE Letters were written immediately upon the publication of the ſecond part of the Hiſtory of the Life of Reginald Pole, and printed in a common newspaper, after the manner deſcribed in the introduction prefixed to the firſt of them; but that being a daily paper, it did not circulate far in the country, nor meet with ſo many readers, as the Author could wiſh, or the ſubject ſeems to require; and many who did read them complained that their attention was too much taken off, and the thread of theſe Remarks too long interrupted by the interval of ſeven days

days between the peruſal of each of them. But the principal reaſon which induced the Author to reprint them, was the defects in the firſt Edition, occaſioned by an unavoidable and unforeſeen avocation towards the latter end of his Epiſtolary Correſpondence; for having promiſed his Printer to ſend him a Letter every week, till the whole was finiſhed, he was obliged in order to fulfil his engagement to abbreviate his Work, and leave out the greateſt part of Pole's character, which rendered it extremely imperfect: He hath therefore found it neceſſary to ſupply this deficiency, by compleating his original deſign, with the addition of two or three Letters upon that Head, and by reviſing and correcting the reſt. The Author doth not pretend to be much converſant in the Writings of Pole's cotemporaries, and Italian friends, or in the Hiſtory of thoſe times, except of his own Country, and other Nations ſo far as they are connected with

with it: but he is of opinion that Mr. Phillips may in a great meaſure be refuted from his own Books, as they will afford ſufficient matter to an attentive examiner for condemning Him, his Hiſtory, his Hero, and his Religion: But if the Reader would ſee this Biographer convicted of and expoſed for Plagiariſms, Anachroniſms, Miſnomers, Quotations from Books he hath never read, the Adoption of the Blunders of Copiers, Slanders of his own invention or borrowed from infamous and exploded Writers, for mutilating paſſages in ſome Authors to make them ſpeak his ſentiments, and producing others as unexceptionable vouchers for facts of which they have given direct contrary teſtimony; let them read two excellent Treatiſes lately compoſed and publiſhed, one by the Reverend Dr. *Neve*, the other by the Reverend Mr. *Ridley*, perſons of great integrity and abilities; who by their intenſe application, and extenſive reading, have made themſelves maſters

maſters not only of the tranſactions at and ſince the Reformation, but of all Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory. And it hath been the peculiar felicity of the Proteſtant Religion, that when it hath been attacked, worthy and learned men have always roſe up in its defence, and by their ſuperior erudition have put to ſilence the ignorance of its petulant and malignant adverſaries.

To

To the Printer of, &c.

IF it be not inconſiſtent with the plan of your paper, I ſhall be obliged to you if you would inſert in it ſome Remarks or Animadverſions upon the Hiſtory of the Life of Cardinal Pole. They will indeed be long, and the ſubjects of many Letters, the firſt of which I have ſubjoined as a ſpecimen of the reſt, in which the General Heads are propoſed, with the method of treating them; ſhould you approve of them you will receive a Letter every week, about the ſame length, or perhaps a little longer, till the whole be finiſhed; and as your paper is generally read, it appears to me at preſent the beſt and moſt publick way of anſwering theſe Books; and I cannot but flatter myſelf, it will be an agreeable entertainment to your readers, to ſee the Proteſtant Cauſe vindicated from the reflections thrown upon it by a warm Advocate of the Romiſh Church.

LETTER I.

THERE hath been very lately publiſhed, in two books, the Hiſtory of Reginald Pole, who was ſecond couſin, by the mother's ſide, to Henry the Eighth, and lived in his and the two ſucceeding reigns. His firm attachment to the Church of Rome, the high dignities he was promoted to in it, the part that he acted in the ever-memorable Revolutions of the Eccleſiaſtical ſtate in this kingdom at thoſe times, and his exerciſing the office of Legate from the See of Rome to Queen Mary, afford this author, Thomas Phillips, an ample field for diſplaying the doctrines of that Church, and ſetting before his readers as circumſtantial a detail of the Reformation as beſt ſuited his purpoſe in decrying it.

His principal deſign, as appears to me from the whole ſcope of his hiſtory, is to extol the Romiſh, and inveigh againſt the Proteſtant Religion. But whatever ſucceſs his vanity or bigotry may have flattered him with, it requires no extraordinary penetration to diſcern what it will be, both with Papiſts and Proteſtants.

As

As to Papiſts it hath been the policy of the Church of Rome, not to ſuffer any of its members to be too curious in prying into its Myſteries; it hath by long experience been found, that an implicit faith, and abſolute ſubmiſſion, are the only effectual means for preſerving a profound veneration for them. For which Reaſons it hath always endeavoured to keep the Laity in as much ignorance as poſſible; the reading, writing, and diſputing upon any controverted points of Religion have by all means been diſcouraged, and even the Holy Scriptures themſelves have not been ſubjected to a vulgar inſpection: As this then is the caſe, what can our Author mean by expoſing the Doctrines of His Church to publick view? Is not this tempting her ſons to an illicit familiarity with them, and to aſſert their Right of private judgment: is it not alſo enhancing the difficulty of tying up their underſtandings and their tongues in this free country, and of maintaining that total ſilence and acquieſcence that are required from them? Whatever teſtimony therefore this doughty performance may bear of its Author's zeal, yet the moſt ſenſible part of the Romiſh Hierachy muſt look

upon it as an unſeaſonable and injudicious Effort to ſerve their Cauſe.

Whilſt they, who are of a different Communion will never be brought over by weak and fallacious arguments; they are not to be impoſed upon by ſpecious gloſſes, nor borne down by dogmatical aſſertions, or the pretended antiquity of Doctrines which contain the groſſeſt abſurdities, and fly in the face of common ſenſe. They cannot help indeed being offended at the bitter acrimony with which the Reformation is traduced, and they muſt be exaſperated at the extreme prejudice which blackens the character of every Reformer, and at the blind partiality which draws every oppoſer of it as an Angel of Light. But with whatever indignation every ſincere Proteſtant may reſent this treatment of his Religion and its Friends, yet no one will be diſpleaſed at having the Tenets of the Church of Rome ſet forth by its own members; for the ſubjects in diſpute being thus aſcertained, the objections againſt them may be produced with greater certainty, and matters brought to a ſpeedy concluſion.

Since Mr. Phillips then hath given this fair opportunity of joining iſſue with him, let his cauſe

cauſe be tried by a candid and ſtrict examination; and if, Sir, you will give me leave, I will communicate to the Publick, through the channel of your Paper, ſome Obſervations upon His Hiſtory and Religion.

And that they may be digeſted into ſome order, it will be proper to begin with Remarks upon his Deſcription of the Reformation, and a particular Diſcuſſion of the two Great Occurrences that diſtinguiſhed the Reign of Henry the eighth, viz. the transferring the Supremacy of the Church from the Pope to the King; and the diſſolution of the Religious Houſes in this Kingdom: Then to examine fairly and freely ſome of the principal Doctrines of the Church of Rome, which this Biographer hath advanced and maintained.

And laſtly, to expoſe his prejudice and partiality, in drawing the characters of the perſons he hath introduced into his books.

But before theſe Remarks are entered upon, it will be neceſſary to ſet before the Reader a brief account of the State of the Church of England before the Reformation.

February 5, 1765. Your's,

CANDIDUS.

LETTER II.

IT is well known to all who are the leaſt converſant in the Hiſtory of England, that the Popes before the reign of Edward the firſt, and indeed for a long time after, conſidered this Kingdom as a conquered Country, and exerciſed their Eccleſiaſtical Power over it in the moſt deſpotick manner: They collated to almoſt all the Church Preferments, not excepting the Biſhopricks and Arch-Biſhopricks; moſt of the richeſt benefices were conferred on foreigners, particularly the Cardinals and their relations, who enjoyed the profits by virtue of the Pope's diſpenſations, without any reſidence upon them: Frequent Taxes were impoſed on the Clergy under pretence of a Croiſade; the Popes had alſo the firſt Fruits and Tenths of all the livings; the Clergy were obliged to maintain their Legates and Nuncios at a great expence, to pay them procurations, and to make large preſents to them; which continually drained the kingdom of its money.

The Supremacy of the See of Rome in the Church of England was the occaſion

ſion of perpetual conteſts between the Pope and the King, and between the Eccleſiaſtical and Civil Migiſtrates; the boundaries of their ſeveral rights could never be ſettled; they both laid claim to the ſame things, and their powers were always interfering.

The Clergy not only inſiſted upon the privilege of being exempted from the cognizance of the Civil Courts and the Trial of Lay Juries, but they extended their own juriſdiction to matters purely Civil, under the pretence of there being no cauſe where Religion was not concerned. They were ſure of being ſupported by the Pope, and in return they conſidered him as their only ſovereign, and always joined with him in his encroachments upon the Prerogatives of the Crown: Theſe were the neceſſary and fatal conſequences of having two independent abſolute heads to the ſame body, or what is called Imperium in Imperio; the kingdom was diſtracted for ſeveral centuries with their mutual contentions; the Papal Power triumphed over the Regal till the reign of Edward the firſt. But the uſurpations of the See of Rome daily encreaſing, the People grew weary of them, and the King, with the Parliament, reſolved to take effectual meaſures

to reſtrain them. They began with the ſtatute of Mortmain, which was enacted in Edward the firſt's time, and gave a ſevere check to the growing riches of the Hierarchy; Some efforts likewiſe were made to deprive the Pope of his Collations to the Biſhopricks in this and the ſucceeding reign, which were perfected by Edward the third, when the ſtatute of Proviſos took place, which cut the Pope off from all Collations to Benefices, and prohibited the Clergy, under very ſevere penalties, from ſuing for Reſervations or Proviſions from the Court of Rome: In this reign alſo the famous ſtatute of Præmunire was paſſed, which forbid the carrying any cauſes into Foreign or Eccleſiaſtical Courts which belonged to the King's Courts; the offenders againſt this Act were impriſoned and all their lands and goods confiſcated to the King. Theſe laws were confirmed and enlarged in ſeveral ſucceeding reigns.

On the other hand, the Pope and the Clergy were not idle in their own defence; they exerted their whole ſtrength againſt the civil power; inhibitions were iſſued out from the Court of Rome; the Laity who ſubmitted to theſe ſtatutes, were laid under an Interdiction,

and

and when they continued obſtinate were excommunicated, the King and the Parliament were ſometimes included in this ſentence: The Popes alſo proceeded ſo far as to aſſume a power of diſſolving ſubjects from their allegiance to their Sovereigns, and obliging them to depoſe and murder them; nay, ſome of the Popes, through the phrenſy of their ambition, thought themſelves inveſted with all Temporal as well as Spiritual Powers; and conſidered Kings and Princes as vaſſals to the See of Rome; one of them in particular, by his ſole authority, publiſhed firſt a truce between the two kingdoms of England and Scotland, when they were at war with one another, and then commiſſioned his Legate to preſcribe the terms, and proclaim a Peace between them, without the conſent of either party, and againſt the will at leaſt of One of them, and compelled them punctually to keep it under pain of excommunication: During theſe conteſts between the Eccleſiaſtical and Temporal Powers, which laſted above two hundred years, the people of England lay under the dreadful neceſſity of ſerving two Supreme Governors, whoſe commands were indiſpenſable and contradictory, and conſequently they lived in a perpetual

ſtate of diſobedience, and were never ſecure either in their perſons or their properties.

This was the ſtate of the kingdom with reſpect to the Supremacy.

In the year 1377, which was the laſt of Edward the Third, Dr. John Wickliff, Rector of Lutherworth, in the dioceſe of Lincoln, began to preach and write againſt the Doctrines and Powers of the Church of Rome; his principal ſubjects were Tranſubſtantiation; the Pope's Supremacy; his Exerciſe of the Keys of Heaven and Hell above other Biſhops; the Lawfulneſs, and even Duty of Temporal Rulers to deprive Eccleſiaſticks of their Endowments, when they made an ill uſe of them, or when their greatneſs is inconſiſtent with, or injurious to, the welfare of the State; that the Holy Scriptures are a perfect Rule of Life; that Monaſtick Severities are unneceſſary; that no Eccleſiaſtick, as ſuch, hath power to impriſon or puniſh offenders, either in their perſons or eſtates.

Here was properly the beginning of the Reformation in England, or, as our Author is pleaſed to call it, of the Defection of one of the faireſt portions of the Catholick Church; for theſe Articles were publickly maintained by Wickliff, and received by all degrees of people,

people, by men of letters, and perſons of quality: They were eſpouſed by many ſtudents at Oxford, among whom were ſome Bohemians, who carried his doctrines into their own country, where they ſoon ſpread over great part of Europe. They were favoured likewiſe by the great men at Court, eſpecially by John of Ghant, Duke of Lancaſter; and Lord Percy, Earl Marſhal, who perſonally appeared in the behalf of Wickliff, and protected him from the proſecutions of the Pope and the Clergy. This great man, who hath indiſputably the honour of being the Firſt Proteſter againſt the doctrines of the Church of Rome, and to whom not only the Church of England but all Chriſtendom are indebted for their Reformation, was endowed with a clear underſtanding and ſolid judgment, accompanied with a ſtrong memory and lively imagination, which he improved by intenſe ſtudy and application, ſo that he had no equal in his time; and indeed he became ſo eminent for his parts and erudition that none of the Prelates or Pillars of the Romiſh Church dared to write againſt him for fear of having their ignorance expoſed, and their cauſe more injured by his ſuperior learning:

He had alſo ſuch an unblemiſhed character as to his life and converſation, that his moſt avowed enemies never charged him with any immoralities; even our Biographer, who went much farther out of his way to abuſe Henry the ſecond, for oppoſing his great Saint and Martyr Thomas a Becket, did not care to foul his pen with any ſlander upon this Arch Apoſtate.

LETTER III.

DR. John Wickliff died a natural death in the year 1384, but his doctrines did not die with him; his diſciples were ſo numerous, that even in his life-time, it was a proverbial ſaying, "Two men could not be "found together, without one being a Lol-"lard or Wickliffian;" and they continued to increaſe after his death; ſo that in the ſpace of four or five years, they began an actual ſeparation from the Church of Rome, and had Prieſts among themſelves to perform divine ſervice, agreeable to their reformed opinions; theſe pretended Schiſmaticks or hereticks, finding themſelves ſupported by an infinite number of friends, endeavoured to get

their

their principles approved of by Parliament; and in the year 1395, preſented a remonſtrance, containing twelve articles againſt the doctrines of the Church of Rome, to the Houſe of Commons. Anathema's and Excommunications, the then *Ratio ultima Pontificis Romani*, were thundered out againſt them; but this ſpiritual artillery proving ineffectual, the Clergy were reſolved to make uſe of carnal weapons, and in the reign of Richard the ſecond, they procured a general licence to impriſon Hereticks; this indeed was ſoon revoked; but in the year 1405 they had greater ſucceſs, for through their influence upon Henry the fourth, they obtained the famous ſanguinary ſtatute *De Heretico Comburendo*, which was no ſooner paſſed but William Sawtre was apprehended and condemned by the Eccleſiaſtical Court for being a Lollard; he was then delivered over to the Civil Magiſtrate and burnt, by virtue of a writ directed to the Mayor and Sheriffs of London: This man was the firſt that ſuffered death for Religion in England by a legal proceſs, and ſtands foremoſt in the Proteſtant Martyrology of this kingdom: The civil wars tween the Houſes of York and Lancaſter breaking

breaking out ſoon after, religious diſputes were in a great meaſure ſuppreſſed, and we hear but little of them till the reign of Henry the ſeventh, when they revived, and were carried on with greater heat than ever through the three ſucceeding reigns; and in the fourth terminated in the total overthrow of the Papal Power, and the eſtabliſhment of the Reformation.

Beſides theſe uſurpations and ſuperſtitious doctrines of the Romiſh Church, there was a third cauſe which raiſed great clamours againſt it, and this was the general depravity and corruption of the times: the church in the 14th and 15th centuries had been miſerably diſtracted by contentions between the Pope and a General Council, between two General Councils, and between two Popes. During theſe ſchiſms all diſcipline was loſt, and ſpiritual wickedneſs prevailed in high places; perſons of the moſt profligate characters were advanced to the papal dignity; they were in general illiterate, proud, ambitious, rapacious and cruel: And of one of them in particular a celebrated Roman Catholic Hiſtorian ſays, that he would have been the moſt wicked man in the world, if his baſtard ſon had not been

been more wicked than himſelf: the diſſolute manners of the Eccleſiaſticks of all orders and degrees, of the ſuperior and inferior, of the regular as well as ſecular Clergy, brought them into extreme contempt, gave infinite offence to the people, and tempted them to ſuſpect the principles of their religion, which had no influence upon the practice of its profeſſors.

Our Author, Mr. Phillips, acknowledges that a Reformation was neceſſary at theſe times, and that it was loudly called for by the true friends of the Church: but then he takes care to explain himſelf upon this head. "It muſt be obſerved, ſays he, that not one of theſe great men, who ſo earneſtly deſired the Reformation of the Church, ever entertained a thought of changing a ſingle Article of her Faith, or aboliſhing any part of her Worſhip; and when turbulent and ſeditious ſpirits preſumed to cenſure her Tenets, or diſpute the Authority of her Paſtors, and particularly of her chief Biſhop, they roſe up in defence of what an uninterrupted Tradition had delivered down to them, and looked on a breach with the Catholic Church, as the greateſt of all evils. All their zeal was to correct abuſes

which

which had vitiated the Primitive Diſcipline, and recal the Piety and Purity of Manners from which Chriſtians of all orders had univerſally fallen." Book I. Page 320.

The want of a Reformation is a point in which we are both agreed, and our author is very full and explicit upon it; but ſince his reaſons for it are not ſo general as mine, it would not be doing juſtice to him, nor perhaps give equal ſatisfaction to the Reader, if they were not ſet forth in his own words; this therefore I will do in as brief a manner as the ſubject will permit.

" The eaſe and opulence, ſays Mr. Phillips, which the Clergy had long enjoyed, brought on thoſe inconveniencies which always attend immoderate wealth, though lodged in conſecrated hands: On whatever motives the Croiſades or Holy Wars were undertaken, they had a miſchievous effect on the morals of the greateſt part of Europe; and the age we are now to enter on, had drained all the dregs which the abſence of Biſhops from their dioceſes, the relaxation of canonical penitence, and the importation of foreign vices, added to the evils of war in general, had left behind them. A gloomy, unprofitable, and litigious kind

kind of learning had taken poſſeſſion of the ſchools which anſwered no purpoſe of Religion or Reaſon.

" To theſe diſadvantages under which Chriſtianity then laboured, the Fifteenth Century had likewiſe the misfortune to ſee moſt of the Popes, during that period, altogether unworthy the ſupreme place they held; and their Court, inſtead of giving that example which the world had a right to expect from it, was infected with vices, which, like a torrent, ſpread themſelves over all nations.

" The ſcandalous traffick of the Grants of Indulgencies, was the glaring diſorder of thoſe times, and had raiſed ſuch a general diſcontent in all orders, as endangered the Grace itſelf, and the Authority which conferred it, to fall into contempt. Leo X. had cauſed Indulgencies to be publiſhed throughout the Chriſtian world, for all perſons who contributed to the building St. Peter's Church, on which magnificent ſtructure he was wholly intent, and towards carrying on a war he had projected againſt the Turk. It muſt be confeſſed, that ſome of the Dominican Friars laid themſelves open to cenſure, by the exorbitant propoſitions they advanced concerning the

 efficac-

efficacy of theſe Pardons, and Luther was a proper perſon to avail himſelf of ſuch an advantage; he began by blaming the abuſe, and then proceeded to condemn the thing, and to ſpeak of the Papal Power in ſuch a manner, as ſeveral Catholic Divines thought themſelves obliged to oppoſe him; this reſiſtance irritated the haughty ſpirit of Luther, and he continued to make freſh Attacks on different Articles of the ancient Doctrine, and to diſcredit it in the minds of the people." Book I. Page 321, 322, 324.

LETTER IV.

THUS the Roman Catholic Divines themſelves acknowledged that theſe Abuſes had broke the peace of the Church, and been uſed as a pretext for an open defection from it; they alſo judged it neceſſary to apply ſome remedy to theſe evils which they ſaw daily increaſing upon them, but it was ſome time before they could agree what that remedy ſhould be; at laſt they reſolved upon a General Council, which was ſoon after held at Trent, and, according to our Author, " was one of the moſt illuſtrious Aſſemblies mankind

kind had ever beheld, and met on an occaſion well deſerving the attention of ſuch a Senate, viz. the Reformation of the Chriſtian world :" But however important the end might be, the means were very inadequate, and the preſcribed remedy totally unavailing; as will plainly appear if we conſider the nature of this Aſſembly, the temper of the Perſons who compoſed it, the manner of their Proceeding in it, and the Effects it produced.

" Several German Princes and States, ſays our Author, would have it compoſed not of Biſhops and Prieſts only, as had hitherto been the practice of the Church, but of Lay Perſons alſo. The general ignorance of the common People, with reſpect to Religion, and the little regard they paid to what they knew of it, diſpoſed them to the ſame perverſeneſs." Book I. p. 326. But however preſumptuous this motion was deemed, or however ſcornfully it was rejected, it doth not appear to have any thing in it either unreaſonable or improper; for Laymen are a part of the Church as well as the Clergy, and equally concerned in the ſubjects of Faith and Practice to be treated of. And there always were Perſons among the Laity as much diſintereſted, and as well qua-

lified in all reſpects for reſtoring ancient Diſcipline, and correcting abuſes in Religion as any of the Clerical Order; ſo that there could be no reaſon alledged from theſe points, why they ſhould not be admitted as the Repreſentatives of the People into theſe Religious Aſſemblies; and neceſſity upon this particular occaſion ſeemed to require it, for the purpoſes of this Council could not be properly anſwered without them: Great part of the grievances which called for redreſs were univerſally acknowledged to be Oppreſſions which the People ſuffered from the Pope and the Hierachy, the Corruptions in the Court of Rome, and the enormities of the Clergy, with ſeveral other ſuch like religious abuſes: now it is an eſtabliſhed maxim in all judicial proceedings, that no one, if it can be poſſibly avoided, ſhould ſit as a judge in his own cauſe, or where there is reaſon to ſuppoſe he may be prejudiced or partial to either ſide: according to this rule, therefore, it was very unfit for the Clergy to be the ſole Arbitrators in things which purely concerned themſelves, or between themſelves and the Laity, or between the Pope and the Laity, becauſe it might be reaſonably preſumed

preſumed they would be under an undue influence in all theſe caſes.

Our Author here acknowledges that the Clergy were too opulent, or that immoderate wealth was lodged in conſecrated hands, and the Inconveniences (a very ſoft Term) which always attend it, were to be redreſſed by this Council: But were they in whoſe hands this conſecrated wealth was lodged proper perſons to redreſs them? Could it be expected that they would paſs any ſuch ſelf-denying Ordinance, and deſtroy the Effects by removing the Cauſe? Or were there any Propoſals made for diveſting themſelves of their enormous Riches, or the leaſt Meaſures taken to prevent the future increaſe of theſe Inconveniences? It was indeed impoſſible there could be: for it is an avowed principle among the Romiſh Hierachy, which they never depart from, and this is ſtrenuouſly inſiſted on by the Author of this Hiſtory, that what is given to the Church cannot be taken back again. This Grievance therefore however loud it might call for Redreſs, could not be heard by the members who compoſed this Council, as they diſclaimed all ſuch Power, though it was pretty effectually corrected in theſe Kingdoms

about

about this time, by a Lay Act, or an Act of Parliament, for the ſuppreſſion of the Religious Houſes.

The caſe was the ſame with reſpect to their exactions on the Laity: there were none to remind the Clergy of them, and it was the leaſt of their thoughts to remind themſelves, for like the Phariſees of old, *They bind heavy burdens and grievous to be born, and lay them on mens ſhoulders, but they themſelves will not move them with one of their fingers.* Mat. xxiii. 4.

But as the ſcandalous Traffick in the Grant of Indulgences was the glaring diſorder which haſtened the calling of this Council, it might naturally be imagined that great part of their time would be engroſſed in healing it. This flagrant evil gave ſuch univerſal offence, that the Clergy themſelves were aſhamed of it; and one of them before this General Meeting, propoſed a ſcheme for reforming it, but it was not approved of; and the expedient which was uſed for evading this, and every other amendment, was a notable inſtance of the Artifice and Chicanery of the Court of Rome: The paſſage in our Author which ſets it forth, is too curious not to be repeated.

" As theſe Innovations had began by ſome abuſes

abuſes in the Grant of Indulgences, Adrian, who was an able Divine, thought of ſetting forth the doctrine relating to them in ſuch a manner as to remove whatever had given offence; and having laid aſide this deſign, he was adviſed to re-eſtabliſh the uſe of public Penitence, as it had been practiſed through many ages with great profit; but was informed by thoſe he conſulted, that the depraved ſtate of Chriſtianity rendered the execution of it abſolutely impracticable. He complained to Soderino, his friend and confident, of the ſlender diſpoſition he found even in the Officers of his own Court, to reform ſeveral unwarrantable practices, which cauſed the Innovators to ſay, that every thing was venal at Rome. The Cardinals, who had been employed under the three laſt Popes, Alexander, Julius, and Leo, repreſented to him, that in the ſituation things then were, thoſe meaſures, which in other circumſtances might be adviſeable, would then only ſerve to make the diſturbers of the public tranquility more inſolent, and heighten their credit with the people: that they would look on the intended Reformation as a conceſſion of the abuſes they had complained of; and inſtead of being ſatisfied with what he

ſhould

ſhould do in order to remedy evils, which length of time had never failed to introduce, would go on to demand other eſſential changes, and thus throw every thing into confuſion." Book I. p. 327.

The Roman Catholicks held that this Council was inſpired, and Mr. Phillips expreſsly declares, that the members were aſſured of a ſupernatural aſſiſtance at this high Tribunal: how then could there be any confuſion? or why were they afraid of this, or any other eſſential Change? If the Grant of Indulgences had been ſcandalouſly perverted, this was certainly the ſeaſon for rectifying it, and reſtoring Religion to its primitive Purity, when they were under the direction of the Holy Spirit. The refuſing therefore to make this conceſſion of abuſes, which all the world exclaimed againſt, and theſe members themſelves were aſhamed of, was a plain indication that they did not care to truſt to their boaſted infallibility: They were conſcious to themſelves that the corruptions of their Church were ſo many, that if they once began there would be no end of reforming, and that the depraved ſtate of Chriſtianity rendered the execution of it impracticable; for which reaſons

ſons they thought the ſhorteſt and ſureſt method would be not to admit of any abuſe at all. The Pope likewiſe was extremely tenacious of his Claims, and would not give up the leaſt part of them; and this unerring Aſſembly was aware that if they ſhould offer to diſpute any of them, he would retaliate upon the Clergy, by ſetting his Legates upon their Exactions; whilſt Apoſtates would be availing themſelves of their altercations: It was therefore agreed that there ſhould be no Inquiſition, or alteration on either ſide, but things ſhould continue in *ſtatu quo*.

Thus the pretended Ends of this grand Council, which continued for eighteen years, were entirely ſet aſide, and inſtead of any Reformation, all the errors that had ever been adopted into the Church were perſiſted in and ratified; and the evils which length of time had never failed to introduce, were left for length of time to carry out again: The Lutherans and Calviniſts were indeed highly exaſperated at theſe proceedings, and the breach in the Church, inſtead of being cloſed, was made wider; but the Council cared not for thoſe things, their whole drift was to vindicate their erroneous Doctrines, to

palliate their Uſurpations, and amuſe their own people with ſome ſpecious ſhew of a Reformation; for which reaſons it was deſervedly called a Solemn Banter upon Religion, and though our Author is grievouſly offended at this impious ſneer, as he is pleaſed to term it, yet I think it would be doing this Council more juſtice, if it was repreſented as a Pompous Exhibition of Eccleſiaſtical Arrogance, and an infamous inſult upon the common ſenſe of the Laity.

LETTER V.

THE excluſion of the Laity from the Council of Trent was not only inconſiſtent with natural juſtice, but alſo contrary to the practice of the Church in the firſt Council held at Jeruſalem; as may be inferred from the brief account which is given of it in the 15th chapter of the Acts of the Apoſtles; upon which plan our Author ſays this general one at Trent proceeded; for there we find that Paul and Barnabas were ſent by the brethren at Antioch to Jeruſalem, to conſult with the Apoſtles and Elders, whether it was needful to circumciſe the Gentile Converts,

verts, and command them to keep the law of Moſes: When they were aſſembled at Jeruſalem, and there had been much diſputing, Peter roſe up and ſpoke, ver. 7; then *all the multitude* kept ſilence, and gave audience to Paul and Barnabas, ver. 12; after they had ſpoken, James delivered his opinion, ver. 13; then it pleaſed the Apoſtles and Elders, with the *whole Church*, to ſend choſen men of their own company to Antioch, with Paul and Barnabas, and wrote letters by them after this manner: The Apoſtles, Elders and *Brethren* ſend greeting unto the *Brethren* which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia; ver. 22, 23: Though it is not expreſsly ſaid that all the Chriſtians, who were then at Jeruſalem, were convened to this Aſſembly, yet it is implied in two or three paſſages, viz. when there had been much diſputing, the whole multitude, πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος, gave audience; that is the whole Body of Chriſtians, Biſhops, Preſbyters, and the Laity. And again, the *whole Church*, as it ſtands contra-diſtinguiſhed from the Apoſtles and Elders, muſt mean all the Converts to Chriſtianity. The *Brethren* alſo are diſtinguiſhed in the ſame manner; which term muſt include the

Lay-Brethren, becauſe the letters which were ſent to all the Gentile Converts were directed to the *Brethren*.

Mr. Phillips aſſerts, that St. Peter was the Prince and Chief of the Apoſtolic College, and preſided at this meeting at Jeruſalem, and that he opened it, b. 1. p. 421. He produces likewiſe a quotation from Cardinal Pole's diſſertation on General Councils, where he ſays, that St. Peter, as Vicegerent of the Son of GOD, exerted the office of Father of the future age, of Guardian and Paſtor of the Church, in the firſt Council held at Jeruſalem, b. iv. p. 345. But this confident aſſertion of Mr. Phillips is ſupported by no kind of argument, nor any authority of the Holy Scriptures; for in the relation of this Council there is not the leaſt mention of St. Peter's preſiding at it, or having any pre-eminence over the other Apoſtles; and for ought that appears, they were all upon an equality; but if there was any difference between them, or if any one was ſuperior to the reſt, it was St. James, who was Biſhop of Jeruſalem, and cloſed the debate with his Speech: And though Peter was the firſt of the Apoſtles that ſpoke, yet it cannot be ſaid with any pro-

priety

priety that he opened this Council; for there had been much diſputing before he gave his opinion.

From all which it is manifeſt, that this Council at Trent was conſtructed upon a plan far different from that at Jeruſalem: the Lay-Brethren here were ſo far from being admitted to debate and diſpute upon the ſubjects laid before it, that whatever orders were made it was expected they ſhould not preſume to heſitate upon or ſcrutinize, but to receive and obey them with an abſolute ſubmiſſion. The Church, ſays Mr. Phillips, in his explication of Pole's ſentiments concerning the decrees of General Councils, is not a popular ſtate in which things are to be decided by the multitude, but a ſtate in which the people are to aſſent to, and execute what is ordered by their rulers. Thus St. Paul, explaining the ſum of his Embaſſy or Apoſtleſhip to the Hebrews, who were united to the new people of the Gentiles, and become a part of the Church, ſays, Obey (*Heb.* xiii. 17.) thoſe who are placed over you, and *ſhew all* ſubmiſſion, becauſe they are *appointed* to watch over you, as being accountable for your ſouls. B. i. p. 341.

This

This text in the original Greek is as follows, Πείθεσθε τοῖς ἡγουμένοις ὑμῶν καὶ ὑπείκετε· αὐτοὶ γαρ ἀγρυπνοῦσιν ὑπὲρ τῶς ψυχῶν ὑμῶν, ὡς λόγον ἀποδώσοντες· which is literally tranſlated in our Engliſh Bibles; "Obey them that have the rule over you, and ſubmit yourſelves, for they watch for your ſouls, as they that muſt give account." In all the Greek manuſcripts which Mills and Kuſter collated, there is hardly any various readings upon this text, and not one that makes the leaſt alteration in the ſenſe of it. I dare ſay, therefore, that Mr. Phillips hath no authority for his verſion of it, which is not only wretchedly bad, but alſo falſe in a very material part of it; and which he deſignedly made ſo to give a ſanction to his preſent argument, without conſidering that he is in a Proteſtant country, where people have the liberty of reading the Holy Scriptures, and are not obliged to take up with what he is pleaſed to paſs for them: There is a wide difference between *ſhew all ſubmiſſion*, and ſubmit yourſelves. It is evident that Mr. Phillips intended to prove from hence the entire ſubjection of the Laity, and it is as evident, that the Apoſtle only meant a ſubjection in things which are reaſonable; and who

are

are to judge of this reaſonableneſs? Muſt it not be they who are to obey? For otherwiſe how are they to diſtinguiſh what they are to be ſubject to, and what not? Or how elſe can they give a reaſon of the hope that is in them? This then is all that St. Paul enjoins; but the Church of Rome goes infinitely farther: that requires the moſt abject ſubmiſſion. It is not as Pole or Phillips obſerves, a popular ſtate, neither doth it conſtitute an Ariſtocracy; but it is the moſt extraordinary deſpotiſm that ever was erected, impoſing a ſlavery more oppreſſive than what the wretch at the oar or in the mine is condemned to; a ſlavery not of the body, but of the will, conſcience, and all the intellectual powers of the mind.

There is no occaſion to warn Proteſtants from being carried away by ſuch imperious treatment; they are not to be talked out of the uſe of their underſtandings, neither will they be borne down by round *ipſe dixits*, or mere dictatorial or dogmatical aſſertions: No man, with his eyes open, and in broad daylight, will ever be perſuaded that he cannot ſee, though his Holineſs, with all his College of Cardinals, ſhould magiſterially pronounce him

him to be ſtark blind, and doom him to eternal perdition if he did not believe it.

I will therefore addreſs myſelf to the Laity of the Church of Rome, and crave their attention to what I have farther to offer upon this head.

LETTER VI.

GENTLEMEN, you are rational Beings, capable of thinking, deliberating, and diſcourſing as well as your Clergy: they are not more, nor you leſs than Men; why then do you ſuffer yourſelves to be treated as perſons void of underſtanding, as brute creatures? who authoriſed them to impoſe this hard condition upon you, of unmanning yourſelves, and tamely ſurrendering up your reaſon to them? He who endowed you with reaſon, expects a reaſonable ſervice from you; and nothing is more impious than to offer the ſacrifice of ignorance upon the altar of the God of Wiſdom: When he condeſcended to expoſ- poſtulate with the people of Iſrael concerning their idolatry, he appealed to their underſtandings, and called upon them to conſider and ſhew themſelves men. Judge for yourſelves; do

do not your ſenſes and your reaſon tell you, that the image you worſhip is a mere log of wood, as ſenſeleſs inanimate matter as the reſidue which you have put into the fire and warmed yourſelves with? Come, ſays the great Jehovah to the Iſraelites, let us reaſon together: are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal? Bring them to the rule of equity which I have ſet before you, and ſee which of us acts moſt agreeable to it. Thus God, the Fountain of Power, and to whom alone all ſubmiſſion is due, graciouſly permits, nay calls upon his creatures, whom he had formed after his own image, to reaſon upon his proceedings. But how different is this from the treatment you meet with from your Eccleſiaſtical Governors? Do they not tell you, that you have no buſineſs to canvaſs, enquire, or examine into their decrees; your whole province being to aſſent and obey: You are to give up your reaſon to theſe ſpiritual guides, to pin your faith upon their ſleeves, and to be all ſubjection to them; they are the phyſicians of your Souls, and therefore you muſt take their preſcriptions without any ſcruple, and ſwallow their pills without chewing. This is the plain meaning of one of your Romiſh

Prieſts, though he expreſſes himſelf in an affectedly perplexed, and obſcure ſtile, when ſpeaking of the Council of Trent, he ſays, " This High Court of Judicature contemplates the moſt ſublime myſteries without being loſt in their blaze : ſhe propoſes them without ambiguity, being aſſured to find in thoſe to whom ſhe ſpeaks, a readineſs to captivate their underſtanding to the obedience of the faith, and a ſtrength of mind capable of ſupporting the weight of the divine ſecret." B. i. p. 424. That is, if I underſtand him right, the weight of its deciſions : a prodigious weight indeed ! which no ſtrength of mind can ſupport but what contains a mountain of Bigotry ; or in the fulneſs of its faith can ſay, *Credo quia impoſſibile eſt.*

I am ſenſible that your Church pretends to be infallible, your Clergy aſſert that it cannot err either in its Doctrines or its Practice ; ſhould this infallibility be admitted, and that by the Church was meant the Pope with his Cardinals, or a General Council of Divines, yet this ſupernatural Gift would not authorize them to deprive others of the uſe of their reaſon, or deſtroy their right of private judgment : and indeed they do not directly and

profeſſedly

profeſſedly aſſume this power over Proteſtants, but treat them with a little more ceremony than they do you of their Communion; even this Author, when he addreſſes himſelf to Proteſtants, vouchſafes to colour over his Doctrines with ſome ſhew of argument, as if he appealed to their underſtandings; but he obtrudes them with a very Magiſterial Air upon his own People, as if they had no underſtandings to be appealed to.

But how do your ſpiritual rulers prove this infallibility which they lay claim to? can they demonſtrate every Doctrine and Article of their Faith, or juſtify every Decree or Injunction which they have made? will not one ſingle error overthrow all their pretenſions? Give me leave then to point out one, from many that might be produced, of which, prejudices apart, ye are very competent judges; and as this ſubject properly belongs to you, and moſt nearly affects your practice, both your Duty and your Intereſt call upon you to give it a fair hearing and ſtrict examination.

Your Church hath always acknowledged the Holy Scriptures, and eſpecially the canonical Books of the New Teſtament, to be written by inſpiration, and to be at leaſt of

equal authority with any of its Decrees or Traditions. Now in the Goſpel of St. *Matthew* it is written, that when Jeſus Chriſt inſtituted the Sacrament of the Holy Euchariſt, " He took Bread and bleſſed it, and brake it, and gave it the Diſciples, and ſaid, Take, eat, this is my Body; and he took the Cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them, ſaying Drink ye all of it, for this is my Blood of the New Teſtament, which is ſhed for many, for the Remiſſion of Sins." *Mat.* xxvi. 26, 27, 28. St. *Mark* ſays the ſame, and very nearly in the ſame words, *Mark* xiv. 22, 23, 24. St. *Luke*'s deſcription of this Inſtitution differs very little from them; as may be ſeen in *Luke* xxii. 19, 20. We read in the Goſpel of St. *John*, c. vi. v. 53, 54, " Jeſus ſaid unto them, (that is the Jews) verily, verily, I ſay unto you, except ye eat the Fleſh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you; whoſo eateth my Fleſh, and drinketh my Blood, hath eternal life; and I will raiſe him up at the laſt day. As theſe words were ſpoken long before the inſtitution of the Lord's Supper, it is the general received opinion among Proteſtants, that they have no reference to it, and are only ſtrong metaphorical

metaphorical expreſſions of the Doctrines of Chriſt; but ſince your Church always produces them as a proof of Tranſubſtantiation, I may take it for granted that you admit them as alluding to this Sacrament, and may uſe them as *Argumentum ad Romanos*. St. *Paul* likewiſe makes mention of this Sacrament, in his firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, x. 16. "The Cup of Bleſſing which we bleſs, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Chriſt? and the Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Chriſt?" And again, chap. xi. 23, 24, 25, "The Lord Jeſus, the ſame night that he was betrayed, took Bread, and, when he had given thanks, he brake it, and ſaid, Take, eat, this is my Body which is broken for you; this do ye in remembrance of me. After the ſame manner alſo he took the Cup, when he had ſupped ſaying, This Cup is the New Teſtament in my Blood: This do ye as oft as ye drink it in remembrance of me."

Theſe I think are all the places in the New Teſtament where this Inſtitution is fully deſcribed; and the receiving the Cup is as expreſsly, and, if there be any difference, more emphatically enjoined than the Receiving the Bread:

Bread: I aſk, therefore, for what reaſon doth your Church with-hold the Cup from you, the Laity? Is it not directly contrary to the expreſs words of Scripture? "Drink ye all of this," is a Command given by our Lord himſelf, in the moſt ſolemn manner; it is his laſt Will, which he made juſt before his death. Upon what authority then doth your Church dare to contradict it? or upon what aſſurance doth it take upon it to declare that the obligation which our Lord hath laid upon all, doth not extend to the Laity? This prohibition is inconſiſtent with the nature of this Sacrament, and ſubverſive of one of the fundamental Articles of the Chriſtian Religion; and what ſtill aggravates this preſumption is, that it is contrary to the conſtant practice of the Primitive Chriſtians, and a late innovation, introduced but a few centuries before the Reformation. It is amazing to me, therefore, that you, the Laity, can ſo quietly ſubmit to it, and thus paſſively diſobey ſuch an expreſs and important Command of our Saviour himſelf. It is juſtly to be queſtioned, and in my opinion a ſcruple which every conſcientious Chriſtian ought to make, whether this omiſſion in one kind, doth not only render the other

other ineffectual, but even offenſive to the Deity; and farther, the receiving the Cup in this Sacrament, from your own interpretation of the Texts in St. *John*'s Goſpel, is made a Condition neceſſary to eternal Life. "Verily, verily, I ſay unto you," ſays our Lord, "except ye eat the Fleſh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, ye have no life in you." This defect therefore is of extreme dangerous conſequence; your Salvation is at ſtake, and calls upon you to conſider well this Text of Holy Scripture. If this then be not an Error in your Church, I do not know what an Error is. If our Saviour is to be obeyed, if he be in the right, then your Church muſt be in the wrong; and if it be in the wrong in one point, it may be in a hundred; and what is ſtill worſe, when it hath once adopted an Error, during the retenſion of this principle of Infallibility, it will hold it faſt; it may accumulate Errors, and every day gather Corruptions; but it can never get rid of them.

LETTER VII.

THIS Sacrament is a poſitive inſtitution of Chriſt. He himſelf adminiſtered it to his Apoſtles, and by his example gave them a ſpecimen of the manner and method he would have obſerved in the future adminiſtration of it: how then can it be wholly received in either kind, when our Saviour hath ſo particularly ordered it to be received in both? and ſince your Clergy themſelves receive it in both kinds, why are you prohibited from them? Are they not as neceſſary for you as for them? I do not pretend to know the motives for denying you the uſe of the Cup, but whatever they are the conſequence is the ſame to you. You have wilfully violated our Saviour's ordinance; and when ye ſhall appear before him, and he ſhall aſk, why did you not celebrate this my inſtitution as I appointed? Did not I tell you abſolutely, that except ye drink my blood ye have no life in you? Were not my commands as clear, poſitive, and full, as what were given to your firſt parents, when they were ordered not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good

and

and Evil?—What anſwer will ye make? will ye offer to excuſe yourſelves by ſaying, that our Prieſts beguiled us, and that in the Council of Trent it was unanimouſly decreed, "the obligation of receiving the Euchariſt in both kinds did not extend to the Laity? That in the diſpenſation of the Sacraments the Church had a power to eſtabliſh ſuch rites as do not affect their nature and ſubſtance? and that the Euchariſt is wholly received in either kind?" Book i. p. 396. and we thought that they were to be obeyed ſooner than you?—But this will but exaggerate, rather than extenuate your crimes. That you may not therefore be found ſpeechleſs, or worſe than ſpeechleſs at this high Tribunal, let me adviſe you to fly as faſt as you can from that Church which obliges you to live in a continual tranſgreſſion of our Saviour's expreſs command, and in which you run ſo great a riſque of your ſalvation; and join yourſelves to the Church of England, where you may receive this Sacrament in both kinds, according to our Saviour Chriſt's Holy Inſtitution, and do every thing elſe that is neceſſary for your ſoul's health. The viſible Head of this Church is a Lay Brother, who is zealous of the liberty, wherewith his maſter

hath made you free; under the protection of his auſpicious government you will enjoy your birth-right, and all the privileges which your underſtanding entitles you to; and in every reſpect ye will be honoured as rational intelligent Beings. His Clergy will embrace you as their Equals and their Brethren, will perfect you in every good work, and make you wiſe unto ſalvation. But to return to our Author.

The Reformation, ſays he, as it was every where termed, " though purſued through endleſs changes, was ſo far from producing any amendment, that the morals of thoſe who relinquiſhed the old Religion became viſibly more degenerate. And its rapid progreſs was ſoon repreſented by Luther, and ſome of his followers, as an argument of its truth, and even as a declaration of Heaven in its favour: but it ſoon found encouragement enough in all the paſſions of the mind of man, without exception, to make its ſucceſs as little wonderful as its original was honourable; though cauſes could not be more natural, and nothing was leſs requiſite than a miracle to give vogue to Doctrines which coincided with all the corrupt inclinations of human nature." B. i. pag. 330.

Is it credible, that the morals of thoſe perſons, who relinquiſhed their old Religion, ſhould become viſibly more degenerate when their motives for relinquiſhing it were the total decay of Chriſtian Piety, and the Profligacy of the Court of Rome, which, like a deluge, had ſpread itſelf over all Chriſtendom? Theſe Corruptions naturally led them to ſuſpect and enquire into the Doctrines of that Church, which had either contributed to, or at leaſt could not prevent theſe overflowings of Ungodlineſs: and from hence they propoſed, by reducing their Religion to its original ſtandard, to reſtore the purity and ſimplicity of manners which diſtinguiſhed the Primitive Chriſtians: Theſe Reformers were ſo far from encouraging mens paſſions, or coinciding with all the corrupt inclinations of human nature, that they cut off every occaſion for giving a looſe to them, and laid all poſſible reſtraints upon them. They had no Pardon-mongers, nor Dealers in Licences to Sin: they did not traffick in Remiſſion of paſt Offences, nor truck with Indulgences for future Crimes. They did not lead their people through the abſurd round of Sin, Confeſs, and be Abſolved; nor encouraged men to begin new

ſcores by wipeing off the old; their Churches were no ſanctuaries to Paricides, Aſſaſſins, or atrocious Ruffians; it was their opinion, that all men had fallen ſhort of perfection, and the beſt were but unprofitable ſervants; from whence they inferred, that no one's deficiencies could be ſupplied by the redundancy of another's merits. Theſe Reformers, indeed, diſapproved of unnatural vows, and retrenched unreaſonable ſeverities; but it was an Article of their Religion, "that Faith without good Works was dead, and even without Charity was nothing worth:" That an innocent and a virtuous life was the neceſſary qualification of a Chriſtian, and that a ſincere Repentance, a total Converſion of the Heart, and an actual departure from iniquity, were the indiſpenſible terms of Salvation, for which there was no ſubſtitution, or ſuccedaneum.

Theſe principles of the Reformation were ſo conſonant to the Holy Scriptures, ſo agreeable to the practice and diſcipline of the primitive Church, and to the common ſenſe of Mankind, that nothing could be more natural than the rapidity of their progreſs; and though nothing was leſs requiſite than a Miracle to give vogue to them, yet it required ſomething more

more than a Romiſh Miracle to render them unacceptable. It happened indeed at a very favourable criſis; the Chriſtian world was juſt awakened from a trance, in which it had lain ſome hundred years, by the oppreſſions of the Hierarchy, and had their eyes open, when theſe Reformations, which recommended themſelves by their ſelf evidence, were held up to them: they were ſo natural and ſo clear, that every man was immediately ſtruck with the ſenſe of them, and wondered at his not being the author of them. This general acknowledgment therefore was a ſtrong preſumptive proof of their truth, and deſervedly looked upon as a declaration of Heaven in their favour.

When I reflect upon the ſeeming inconſiſtency between Mr. Phillips's deſcription of the influence of the Reformation, and the real effects it produced upon the minds of men, I cannot help thinking that I have miſapprehended his meaning, and that he muſt take *a degeneracy in morals* in a far different ſenſe than what I do; for I have all along ſuppoſed it to be a defection in the great duties of Morality, in Piety, Juſtice and Temperance, the ſum and ſubſtance

of

of all natural and revealed Religion. But I ſuſpect that Mr. Phillips underſtands by degeneracy of morals a defection from the rules which the Church of Rome hath drawn; and by corrupt inclinations, a non-conforming temper to the orders and deciſions of its ſpiritual Guides; for in other places of his Hiſtory an implicit obedience to them is apparently his Canon of Piety, Virtue, Rectitude, Liberty, Probity, &c. Should this then be his meaning, he may poſſibly evade my objections; but then I muſt beg leave to obſerve, that when he uſes theſe venerable terms in this narrow Romiſh ſenſe, without explaining himſelf, he is playing the Jeſuit with his Reader, and through the moſt equivocal Expreſſions impoſing upon him a falſe and ſcandalous Character of the Reformation.

LETTER VIII.

THE next thing to be conſidered is the Diſſolution of the Monaſteries, and other Religious Houſes, which was the offence that irritated Pole to fly in the face of his royal Relation, Benefactor and Patron, and to publiſh his book, *De Unitate Eccleſiaſtica*; in which he abuſes the King, and exhorts the Emperor, and other Princes of Europe, to turn their arms againſt him. Our Author, therefore, hath made this Diſſolution a principal ſubject of his Hiſtory, and given a prolix and circumſtantial account of ſeveral particulars concerning it, in which he endeavours to juſtify his Hero in this part of his conduct, and draws up a virulent charge of Rapine and Sacrilege againſt the King, and all the Perſons who were concerned in giving this fatal blow to his Religion; "which, he ſays, had made England a Theatre of as various and deep a Tragedy, as that or any other nation had ever been ſpectators of under the wildeſt and moſt frantic of their Tyrants." B. i. p. 102.

Again, "All the vigor which the ſpirit of deſtruction can give, was exerted by him who had

had aſſumed the Headſhip of the Church of England. Henry exhibited a ſcene of Rapacity and Sacrilege, which till then had wanted a precedent, and, for the honour of human nature, has not been copied ſince. An incredible treaſure, which the plunder of 700 Religious Houſes had brought in, being now as laviſhly ſquandered as it was ſhamefully acquired; and the cravings of Avarice and other Paſſions, being only irritated by a perpetual condeſcention to them, he cauſed the Parliament to make over to him the Revenues, Churches, and Buildings belonging to all the Colleges, Seminaries, Chanteries and Brotherhoods, throughout England, with full power to diſpoſe of all ſacred Oblations and Funds, appropriated to all ſuch like purpoſes.—Of all theſe Donations, only the Colleges within the two Univerſities; thoſe of Wincheſter and Eton, the Chapel of St. George at Windſor, and a few others, upon earneſt application, eſcaped being reformed; or in other words, ſuppreſſed." B. i. p. 336, 337, 338.

I ſhall not take upon me to determine upon what principle the King acted in the ſuppreſſion of the Monaſteries, whether it was avarice, ambition, revenge upon the Pope, anger at the Monks, or zeal for the public good; or

or whether it was a compoſition of ſome or all of them. It is likewiſe foreign to my purpoſe to conſider in what manner Henry diſcharged the truſt his Parliament had repoſed in him for the application of the monies he had received from the ſale of the real and perſonal eſtates belonging to theſe Religious Houſes; or what proviſion he made for thoſe he turned out of them; and for the ſame reaſon I ſhall paſs over in ſilence the monſtrous diſorders, both moral and religious, which the Commiſſioners, upon their viſitation, had diſcovered among them. It is not fair to argue againſt the uſe of things from the abuſe of them, or againſt what might have been done from what was done. I ſhall therefore proceed upon a more general plan, and ſhall examine into the nature, purpoſes, uſes, and effects of theſe eſtabliſhments, and from thence ſhall ſet forth how far the diſſolution of them at the Reformation, or any other time, might be juſtifiable or expedient; for which end, it will be proper to enquire, what number of perſons theſe houſes then contained, what their finances were, and in what manner the State was affected by them.

It is agreed by all Hiſtorians, that the leſſer Monaſteries ſuppreſſed, were about 376, and the number of perſons they contained was about 10,000. There is ſome little variation concerning the greater Monaſteries; but not to differ with our Author for trifles, we will take up with his account of them. "There were, ſays he, about this time, 700 Religious Houſes in England and Wales; (p. 213.) beſides theſe Religious Houſes, which may be looked upon as Capital Meſſuages, there were ſeveral leſſer Tenements, ſuch as Colleges, Churches, Hoſpitals, Chanteries, Free-Chapels, Guilds, and ſeveral other Foundations of the like import; the number of theſe eſtabliſhments at the time I am ſpeaking of, is ſaid to have been 2734." p. 337.

The number of perſons in theſe Capital Meſſuages; or in the Leſſer Tenements, is no where preciſely aſcertained; only, in general, Mr. Phillips ſays of the firſt, B. i. p. 218, that there were ſome Hundred Thouſands of perſons in them; the leaſt, therefore, that can be ſuppoſed, is 200,000; and in the other he tells us, there was a competent number of Prieſts; one of which had two, another ſix: the

the whole therefore may be reaſonably ſuppoſed, upon a very moderate computation, to be 10,000: hence the ſum total of the Religious Perſons in the greater and leſſer Monaſteries, and other ſuch like foundations, was at leaſt 220,000, excluſive of the Secular or Parochial Clergy: A prodigious body of people! and which, if it be conſidered how the kingdom had been lately depopulated by the long and bloody Civil Wars between the Houſes of York and Lancaſter, could not be leſs than a tenth part of its Inhabitants: and what rendered it the more alarming was, they were under the immediate protection of the Pope, conſidered him as their Sovereign, and always took his part againſt the Crown and the Civil Power. Hence the firſt public ſtep that Henry took againſt the Monaſteries, was a Repreſentation to his Parliament; in which he ſet forth, that the great number of them in the kingdom was a burden to the State, and earneſtly deſired them to remedy the evil by ſuch means as they ſhould think proper. This was a very popular plea, and adapted to the general ſenſe of the nation, who had long ſince looked upon the daily increaſe of theſe Houſes as a growing evil which wanted greatly to be redreſſed.

Theſe Religious Perſons likewiſe were protected, and enjoyed all the privileges and emoluments of the Community, with an exemption from the labours, ſervices, perſonal attendances, and duties of it. Some mighty Benefits therefore might naturally be expected from ſuch an immenſe number of Perſons, with ſuch ſpecial immunities : but what were theſe ſervices? Some of our Pious or Superſtitious Anceſtors, had erected large and ſtrong Edifices, and endowed them with Lands or Eſtates ſufficient to maintain a certain number of Prieſts, whoſe ſole buſineſs ſhould be to celebrate ſolemn Maſſes every day for the repoſe of the Souls of their Founders, and their deliverance out of Purgatory.

This was the original deſign of many of theſe inſtitutions ; and theſe Prieſts were immured and ſequeſtered from the world and all the concerns of it, that they might wholly attend upon Divine Worſhip in theſe perpetual Sanctuaries. Their principal uſe therefore was, not ſo much to the preſent or future Members of the Community, as to thoſe who had been, and were gone out of it. To this principal uſe our Author, in vindication of theſe Monaſteries, adds ſome few ſubordinate advantages

vantages accruing to the Publick from them, one of which indeed ſeems to be peculiar and eſſential to them; but whether it was a real advantage or not depended entirely upon the nature of the Inſtitution itſelf: the other were only incidental, and might be had equally if not better without them.

" The firſt, that he mentions, is the eaſe and conveniency which our Gentry and Nobility enjoyed, of providing for younger Children, who were diſpoſed to retire from the world with the opportunity of ſtudy and recollection, and an eſtabliſhment for life ſuited to the rank their families held; the charge of which was by this means leſſened, and the perpetuity of their eſtates better ſecured." pag. 219.

Now if theſe Foundations were a real Nuſance to the State, or if it would be infinitely better for the Society in general, or theſe young men in particular, to be bred up either in one of the three profeſſions, Law, Phyſick, or Divinity, as now eſtabliſhed, or employed in Merchandize or Trade, or ſent into the Army or Navy, or to ſerve their Country in any other public or private capacity, then this diſpoſal of them in Monaſteries, would be a diſadvantage

diſadvantage to the Community: and this retirement from the world would be a kind of artificial death to theſe younger branches, and afford no other eaſe or conveniency to their unnatural Parents, than what their real death would give to them.

LETTER IX.

THE next uſe which this Author aſcribes to theſe Religious Houſes is, " the Abbeys were public Schools for Education, each of them having one or more perſons ſet apart to inſtruct the Youth of the Neighbourhood, without any expence to the Parents; and young Perſons of the other Sex had the ſame advantage from the Convents of Women, where they were taught Needle-work, to read their Mother-Tongue, and had ſometimes a tincture of the Latin." pag. 219.

But this was not according to the original inſtitution of Monaſteries, and was voluntarily undertaken by thoſe whoſe ſpirits were too active to ſubmit to the indolence which their profeſſion inclined them to; and I do not ſee how theſe Abbies could be called publick Schools, when there was not more than one perſon

perſon out of three or four hundred, who would trouble themſelves with them: As the women in the Convents could not officiate at the Altar, they were of no ſervice to their friends in another world, and they muſt have been entirely loſt to this, had not this employment of teaching to read and work been contrived for them: But though the Monks might be Schoolmaſters, and the Nuns muſt be Schoolmiſtreſſes; yet there was no neceſſity that Schoolmaſters ſhould be Monks, or Schoolmiſtreſſes Nuns.

It is no wonder, indeed, that among ſuch a multitude of perſons who lived in theſe retirements, ſome of them ſhould apply themſelves to Letters; they may boaſt of two or three Hiſtorians, and as many natural Philoſophers, but there were very few others whom the world is obliged to for any kind of literary improvements; the generality of them confined themſelves to School Divinity, or the Study of Cannon Law or Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitutions; their ignorance in moſt other things was ſo notorious as to be almoſt proverbial, and the few compoſitions which cruel time hath ſpared, are ſufficient proofs of their extreme dullneſs and vitiated taſte.

It is likewiſe added, that theſe Monaſteries were made the Repoſitories of Learning; that many Records and valuable Manuſcripts were lodged in them, and that at the diſſolution of theſe houſes, many of them were loſt or deſtroyed: probably they were, but what then? Is it any vindication of the monaſtick order, or any proof of its utility, that their houſes were proper receptacles of books and archives?

Theſe I think are the chief if not all the uſes which this warm Advocate imputes to theſe Religious Houſes; let us now turn ourſelves to the conſideration of the evils that attend them, and in the firſt place let me aſk, whether the number of theſe ſequeſtered Perſons increaſing by continual endowments, might not at length be diſproportionable to the other parts of the Society, and demand ſuch large draughts from the people, as to leave the reſidue inſufficient for the exigencies of the ſtate? Is it not poſſible for the ſwarms of labourers in this ſpiritual Harveſt to be ſo large as to breed a ſcarcity of Hands for the temporal Harveſt, or for the procurement of the neceſſaries and conveniencies of Life from Agriculture and Paſtorage? May not Trade and Commerce languiſh,

languiſh, mechanick Arts and Manufactures be loſt, for want of perſons to protect and preſerve them. And, laſtly, might not the kingdom, from a redundancy of defenceleſs members, be ſo exhauſted of its ſtrength as to be incapable of protecting or ſecuring itſelf from inſurrections or invaſions? Theſe queſtions are ſo plain, that even they, who believe a purgatorial ſtate, and the efficacy of Maſſes in delivering the Souls of the deceaſed out of it, will not heſitate to anſwer in the affirmative. For the ſame reaſon, likewiſe, it muſt be acknowledged, that the number of Religious Houſes, for the prevention of theſe grievances, ſhould be limited, or when it becomes exceſſive ſhould be reduced; it is ſelf-evident alſo that the power of this limitation and reduction muſt be veſted in the State, and flows from the very principles of Self Preſervation; the State likewiſe muſt be a proper judge of theſe numbers, for when they are an evil, it is to that alone, and not only its welfare but its very being depends upon the redreſs of it.

Thus far then I preſume, that the Roman Catholick and the Proteſtant are agreed. They both will admit a poſſibility of an ex-

ceſs in theſe cloyſtered numbers, which the State is to prevent, and correct, when it happens: but they may differ widely about the number which forms this exceſs: the firſt, from his attachment to theſe Religioniſts, may think that one tenth part, or perhaps a quarter, or a half of the community might not be too much to wait upon the urgent neceſſities of Souls in another world, and from thence conclude that there was no occaſion for any reformation in the 16th century.

But the Proteſtant hath no Purgatory in his Creed, or in the Articles of his Religion; he believes that this whole Doctrine is unnatural and abſurd, and that it hath no foundation in the Scriptures, or primitive Chriſtianity, but is a recent invention, a chimera ſprung from the fruitful imagination of Romiſh Prieſts, and ſupported by the ſuperſtitious credulity of the populace; and therefore he concludes, that all the Maſſes and Prayers for Souls in Purgatory are idle and vain, and the inſtitution of Monaſteries abſolutely unneceſſary: With this perſuaſion, he looks upon the whole order of Monks and Friars as a ſuperfluous Corps, of no kind of ſervice to the dead, and of diſſervice to the living; not only affording

ing no ſupport to the State which ſupports them, but hanging like a dead weight upon it, and ſinking it into contempt and penury. The ſtrength of a nation is eſtimated more from the number of its ſubjects than the extent of its territories; but then it is ſuppoſed that theſe ſubjects are effective men, jointly exerting their powers for the public good, and through their induſtry contributing to the increaſe of the common ſtock on which they ſubſiſt; for ſhould they be inactive idle perſons, they are a double loſs to the ſociety, being leſs than cyphers, a kind of negative quantities or numbers, that tell on the contrary ſide; as drones, therefore, they ſhould be expelled from the hive, for incommoding the working Bees, and living upon their labours, without making any returns: Or, to vary the metaphor, they are in the body politick what wens, or white ſwellings are in the natural body, which draw the vital nouriſhment from every part, and by their enormous increaſe emaciate the whole conſtitution, and admit of no other cure but amputation.

Thus the Proteſtant is of opinion, that there is no moderating the number of Monks; but, whether it be a tenth or a ten thouſandth

part of the community, it is exceſſive, and that the whole tribe is the peſt of Society, and a ſcandal to Religion and Human Nature; and from thence he thinks, that he and the Society to which he belongs, would be greatly defective in their duty to God and themſelves, if they ſhould ſuffer any ſuch eſtabliſhments to take place, or if they had taken place, not to exert their utmoſt ſtrength for their total extirpation.

Let us ſuppoſe, for the farther illuſtration of this ſubject, a perſon of an enthuſiaſtick turn believing that his ſoul, after its ſeparation from the body, will be ſuſpended in the air, and for its entertainment or repoſe there, to leave by his will an eſtate for the maintenance of three or four hundred men, on condition that they ſecrete themſelves from the world, and ſpend their whole time in making ſoap-lather, and blowing up bubbles into the air with it; doth not this inſtitution appear ſo extremely ridiculous, and the futile employment of ſo large a number of hands ſuch a manifeſt detriment to the public, that the Rulers in whom the ſupreme power is lodged, would be deemed as much out of their ſenſes as this Founder, if they did not ſet aſide his will,

will, and apply his eſtate to ſuch uſes as ſhould be judged moſt conducive to the common weal? But doth not every Member of the Reformed Churches firmly believe, that the donations for the relief of Souls in Purgatory are as fruitleſs in themſelves as this legacy, and as prejudicial to the community? And do not ſuch Prayers ſeem as empty Bubbles, and like them to evaporate into air: There is indeed this difference between them, one is a mere inanity, or childiſh amuſement; but the other is ſomething more, it is an impious mockery of the Deity, and therefore calls louder for a ſuppreſſion.

LETTER X.

THE next objection againſt the monaſteries is the immenſe riches they poſſeſſed.

Mr. Phillips ſays, "that the yearly value of theſe places, excluſive of their moveable goods, which muſt have been beyond any eſtimate, was computed at 135,522 pounds. This income, however, great as it is, bore a much leſſer proportion to the wealth of the nation than is generally imagined; the produce of the

the Lands and Poſſeſſions of England, ſome time before this period, had been rated at three millions; and thus what the Monaſteries poſſeſſed did not exceed one twentieth part of the national Revenue; a ſum much below what a deſign to deſtroy them firſt gave out, and Credulity hath ſtill retained." Pag. 214.

And Credulity hath very juſtly retained it, if there be any truth in Hiſtory; and I cannot but think, Mr. Phillips could not be ignorant that the Monaſteries had much larger Incomes; for a very few pages after, ſpeaking of the generoſity of the Monks to their Tenants, he ſays, that the reſerved Rents of theſe Landlords were low, and their Fines eaſy: pag. 222. The yearly Rents, as appears from Stevens's Hiſt. of Taxes, pag. 215, were given in at 152,517l. 18s. 10d. but it had ever been the cuſtom of theſe Houſes for ſeveral political reaſons, to let out their Eſtates upon Leaſes, with ſmall reſerved Rents and large Fines; and a little before their diſſolution the Abbots and Priors foreſeeing the impending ſtorm, and willing to provide againſt it by an extraordinary ſupply of ready money for their future ſubſiſtence, ſtill lowered theſe Rents

Rents and raiſed theſe Fines; and from theſe laſt Leaſes, it is ſuppoſed, that Stevens's calculation of their yearly Rents was taken; moſt of our Hiſtorians, who have treated of this ſubject, agree that theſe reſerved Rents were not more than a tenth part of their real Income, which muſt therefore be very nearly 1,525,170 l. a year; and this account will appear to be no ways exaggerated, if it be conſidered what the Eſtates were which only two of theſe Houſes were endowed with: Stevens, in his Hiſtory of Taxes, ſays, pag. 188, and 216, that the Lands belonging to the Abbey of St. Alban's are worth, at this time, about 200,000 l. a year, and thoſe that belonged to Glaſſonbury-Abbey above 300,000 l. a year; ſo that if theſe Eſtates were at their diſſolution worth but a fourth part of what they are at preſent, yet even then the yearly value of only two of them would not fall greatly ſhort of what our Author makes the Income of the whole ſeven hundred amount to: from all which it is manifeſt, that if the produce of the Lands and Poſſeſſions of England, about this period, had been rated at three millions, theſe Religious Houſes had above one half of it. But how ſhall we account for Mr. Phillips's

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mentioning only the reſerved Rents, and dropping the Fines, which were nine parts in ten of their Income, and from thence inferring, that it was not more than a twentieth part of the national Revenue? Was not this acting the Jeſuit with his Reader? He knew that fines were paid to the Monks, and he muſt know that they bore no inconſiderable ſhare in their annual profits, and produces them as ſuch for proofs of their kindneſs to their tenants: but he was conſcious to himſelf, that if he did not ſink them in his Account of their wealth, they would amount to ſuch a prodigious ſum, as would furniſh the Reformers with a ſpecious pretence for their ſuppreſſion; for that reaſon he there takes no notice of them, or rather inſinuates, and, in effect ſays, that none were received: thus, right or wrong, he is determined to make the beſt of his cauſe, and when truth doth not ſerve his turn, he can have recourſe to falſehood, and ſo play the whole game; but he doth not conſider, that no good can come from it in the end. A weak or a wicked defence will hurt the cauſe it labours to vindicate; and he that practices falſhood or deceit, always expoſes his ſubject and himſelf; for he

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not only betrays the want of ſomething better to ſupport it, but by his Hypocriſy blackens it, and blaſts his own credit.

But to return to theſe revenues. The State might well be jealous of the Monaſteries, when they had larger poſſeſſions than the whole Legiſlature, viz. King, Lords, and Commons; and had more than one moiety of the lands of the kingdom, beſides their moveables and perſonal eſtates, which our Author aſſures us was an *incredible treaſure, and beyond any eſtimate:* And though the Statutes of Mortmain had laid ſome reſtraints upon their appropriating more lands, yet means had been contrived to evade thoſe Acts; how elſe could they have accumulated ſuch an amazing quantity of freeholds within the ſpace of one or two centuries? But the influx of goods and money was unlimited; theſe were continually increaſing, without controul and without end; and were then, or would ſoon have been, ſufficient to purchaſe the other moiety of the kingdom, and were hoarded up for ſome favourable conjuncture; or till ſome weak Sovereign, ſuch as Mary or James the Second, ſhould open the way for them by removing the obſtacles of Mortmain, and perſuading the

Nobility and Gentry to lay up treaſures in Heaven, by aſſigning over their eſtates on earth to the Church.

Every Government ought to have a watchful eye over perpetuities, of whatever kind they are; for they cauſe a ſtagnation of property, throw it into a few hands, and tend to deſpotiſm and ſlavery. Where the perpetuity is ſmall, there is indeed but little or no danger to be apprehended from it; but where it is large, it becomes an alarming circumſtance to the State, becauſe it is not only a growing evil, but is continually increaſing in proportion to its bulk.

In this or the preceding reign there was a great reform made in the tenure of temporal freehold eſtates; for the Legiſlature, finding great inconveniencies from perpetuities, ſtruck at the very root of them, by ſuffering lay proprietors of lands to diſpoſe of them by will or ſale, and no entail was permitted to be made, but what the firſt Tenant, born after it was made and in poſſeſſion of the entailed eſtate, was empowered to cut off, by obſerving ſome forms in law preſcribed for that purpoſe: by which means there was a free circulation of property; every ſubject enjoyed the privileges

which

which his natural equality entitled him to: Credit was enlarged, Commerce promoted, Merit, Induſtry and Oeconomy met with adequate rewards, and Sloth, Luxury, and Extravagancy their proper puniſhments: And from this time it became an eſtabliſhed maxim in the Courts of Juſtice, that the Law abhors a Perpetuity, as tending to ſubvert the conſtitution.

LETTER XI.

"AN Act of Parliament, ſays Mr. Phillips, was framed to ſettle Rapine and Sacrilege, as Lord Herbert terms them, on the King and his heirs for ever.—It doth not appear to have been debated in either Houſe, whether they had a power to diſpoſſeſs ſome hundred thouſand perſons of their dwellings and fortunes, whom a few years before they had declared to be good ſubjects; they ſeem to have as little conſidered whether ſome things were not above the reach of Legiſlature, and if a ſtatute can unconſecrate a church, and make Sacrilege no crime. All Religions, natural and revealed, true and falſe, have conſtantly ſuppoſed Conſecrations made to the

Supreme Being to be of a real and perpetual nature; the conſequence of which is, that whatever is thus transferred, and, as it were, veſted in them, cannot be taken back, without his conſent ſignified to thoſe he hath appointed Interpreters of his will, and Delegates of his power." Pag. 217, 218.

A modeſt perſon would have been very well aſſured of his premiſſes before he had drawn ſuch a bold concluſion, as that the diſſolution of the Monaſteries and the alienation of their Eſtates were Rapine and Sacrilege; but Mr. Phillips, without the leaſt ſhadow of a proof, arrogantly ſuppoſes that the Legiſlature had no kind of right or power over them, and upon this preſumption ſtigmatizes the King, Lords, and Commons, for a pack of Thieves and lawleſs Plunderers. Both Houſes of Parliament had frequently and lately debated in the moſt ſolemn manner, whether they had not a power to alter or change that courſe of Property which Law or Cuſtom alone had eſtabliſhed, and whether it was not more agreeable to the nature of Society in general, or the Engliſh Conſtitution in particular, to enable Tenants in Tail, or Tenants in Fee Simple, to alienate or tranſfer their eſtates, by whatever means and to whatever

whatever perſons they pleaſed; and, upon the matureſt deliberation they conferred this power upon them; and no one ever diſputed their authority, or branded them for Plunderers of the Public, or Robbers of Poſterity. There was, therefore, very little occaſion for much more conſultation on this ſubject; but they might very well take it for granted, that if they could impower individuals to alienate their eſtates, and to diſpoſſeſs themſelves and their families of them, where the accumulation of riches was not likely to riſe to any greater grievance than to incommode the common wealth, they muſt have the ſame power over large bodies of people, where it tended to the ſubverſion of it; and eſpecially thoſe who were ſetting up an independency on the ſtate, acknowledging a different head, and were inveſted with an enormous quantity of wealth, ſufficient to maintain theſe pretenſions; here their imminent dangers called for an immediate redreſs, and a deſperate diſeaſe required a deſperate cure. The Monaſteries had already got poſſeſſion of one half of the lands of the kingdom, and if their progreſs was not ſpeedily ſtopped, they muſt ſoon have the other half, and then the conſequence would be a total

ſuppreſſion

ſuppreſſion of the temporal power; the civil ſtate would be ſwallowed up by the eccleſiaſtical, and the people muſt have been Vaſſals to the Pope and the Hierarchy.

There is nothing above the reach of the Legiſlature that comes within the province of Self-defence. The adjuſting the boundaries of Property, inſtituting the ſeveral modes of its Tenure and Conveyance, and the terminating diſputes concerning it, are the peculiar privileges of the civil Power, as they are neceſſary for the ſecurity and peace of Society. My writings are the Title to my eſtate, becauſe the Laws of my Country have made them ſo; but they would be no better than waſte paper, if they had not the authority of the Courts of Juſtice ſtamped upon them, and were not executed according to the directions preſcribed by them. And what other Title hath the Church to its Revenues? Were not the firſt Grants of them made by the Legiſlature, or under its authority, and are not the poſſeſſion of their Eſtates ſecured by it? Deeds of Gift, Wills and Purchaſes, would have had no validity in them, if they had not received their ſanction from the civil magiſtrate: and as he was originally inveſted with the power of making

making or allowing theſe Grants or Charters, ſo he hath continued to exerciſe it, by confirming and enlarging them when he thought them too little, and prohibiting their increaſe when he judged them ſufficient: and Mr. Phillips himſelf can make uſe of this human authority, when it ſerves his purpoſe, to ſtrengthen the Rights of the Church. This property, ſays he, had been aſſured to the Poſſeſſors by every Title on which Right can be founded, by a Preſcription of many centuries, and by the repeated Acts of above thirty Parliaments. Pag. 214.

Now the preſcription of many centuries is the common law of the land, and conſequently their whole right was founded upon common and ſtatute law: but theſe are entirely dependent on the will of the Legiſlators, who can continue, alter, or repeal them at pleaſure. As therefore the civil power firſt allowed of and eſtabliſhed theſe Deodands, as it afterwards confirmed, encreaſed and reſtrained them, ſo it muſt have the ſame authority to diminiſh or ſubtract from them, when they ſhould prove incompatible with the welfare of the ſtate; and one Act of Parliament can reſcind, or annul,

annul, what thirty or three hundred Acts have made, or confirmed.

Mr. Phillips very dogmatically aſſerts, that " all Religions, Natural and Revealed, True and Falſe, have conſtantly ſuppoſed, that Conſecrations made to the Supreme Being to be of a real and perpetual Nature;" meaning, I ſuppoſe, all Gifts or Offerings to the Church or Clergy. All Religions have undoubtedly acknowledged them to be of a real, that is, of a poſitive and ſubſtantial Nature; but, for my part, I know of no Religion except the Romiſh, that ever acknowledged them to be perpetual, or unalienable. None of the reformed Churches ever pretended to ſuch an independency on the Civil Magiſtrate: the Church of England, in particular, hath in none of her Articles, Canons or Conſtitutions, ever maintained or ſuppoſed ſuch a perpetuity. The Clergy hold their Benefices, and are protected in them by the Laws of the Land; and they have conſtantly ſuppoſed that the Parliament hath an abſolute power to change, or transfer, the Church Revenues, to ſuffer the Alienations of the Patronage of Livings, or prohibit, by a Statute of Mortmain, all Legacies of

of freehold Eſtates to any corporate, or unalienating Body, by Will; neither do I know, that they aſſume any right or claim, ſeparate or diſtinct from the ſecular power.

It is a very ambiguous and equivocal expreſſion, and could come from none but a rank Papiſt, that what is transferred to the Church or the Clergy, is veſted in the Supreme Being. Allow Mr. Phillips this propoſition, and let him put what ſenſe he pleaſes upon it, which he takes for granted that you will, and he will make it an eaſy conſequence from the nature of this inveſtiture, that it cannot be taken back without the conſent of the Supreme Being, ſignified by thoſe he hath appointed Interpreters of his Will, and Delegates of his Power. Thus a Perpetuity is proved in a very conciſe manner: but it is too conciſe not to need an Explication; for if Mr. Phillips means, that whoever makes over any Lands or Goods to the uſe of the Church, or for the benefit of the Clergy, gives up not only his own Right and Title, but all the Power or Juriſdiction the State hath over them, and puts them directly and immediately into the hands of the Deity, who hath been pleaſed to ſignify his acceptance of them, then he is aſſuming the very thing

he ought to prove, and which never can be proved: but if he hath any other meaning, then his concluſion will not follow.

The Pope, I ſuppoſe, is intended for the Delegate, who is to ſignify the conſent of the Supreme Being; but I ſhould be glad to be informed, how this conſent is communicated to him. Did he receive any particular inſtructions from Heaven in Queen Mary's reign, when his Legate, under his Direction, pretended to confirm the alienation which the Parliament made in Henry the VIIIth's time? If he did, he executed them with a very ill Grace, and moſt unbecoming a Plenipotentiary of the Moſt High, who could never commiſſion him to deal in ſuch equivocal expreſſions as implied a feigned or a forced conſent. The Commons ſoon found, from the Pope's illuſive reſervations, that there was no dependence upon him; and when a propoſal was made to them for repairing and re-endowing the old Monaſteries, they laid their hands upon their ſwords, and ſaid, they knew how to defend their property: and therefore this ſcheme was then deferred till a more favourable opportunity ſhould offer; and every preſent or future Proprietor of theſe alienated

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Lands, will always have the greateſt reaſon to ſuſpect, that a favourable opportunity will offer for diſputing their Titles, and ejecting them out of their Poſſeſſions, whenever the Pope ſhall be reſtored to the Supremacy of the Church, and the Plenitude of his Power in England.

But ſince Mr. Phillips hath miſtaken the Delegate of the Supreme Being, I will endeavour to ſet him right, and ſhew him whom He hath delegated his Power to in this affair, and in what manner He hath aſſured them of his conſent, in taking back what hath been conſecrated to his Service.

LETTER XII.

EVERY man hath a natural Right of Self-defence; it is given him by the Deity, who inveſted him with it at his Creation; and on this Right the authority of the Civil Magiſtrate is founded. All the members of his community are his Conſtituents; they have commiſſioned him to act for them, and delegated to him their powers of Self-preſervation. He is therefore their Attorney, or Repreſentative, and derives his power immediately

from the people, and mediately, or through them, from their Creator. For this reaſon I apprehend the Apoſtle to the Gentiles ſays, that theſe rulers are of God, and ordained by him; and whoever reſiſteth them, reſiſteth the ordinance of God. *Rom.* xiii. 1, 2. Hence their power is, ſtrictly ſpeaking, a *jus Divinum: vox Populi vel vox Magiſtratus eſt vox Dei!* But the right of Self-defence is a right which may be delegated, but cannot be abſolutely or without a power of revocation given up, either by the People or the Magiſtrate, and nothing can be done which implies a total ſurrender of it; hence the Parliament itſelf cannot create an abſolute perpetuity, or an unalienable poſſeſſion: neither can they ſuffer any one to do it under them. But whilſt this principle of Self-Defence remains, the power of revocation muſt remain with it: *ſalus Populi eſt Suprema Lex*; the Self-preſervation of millions is the firſt law of nature, or of the God of nature, who hath engraven it in ſuch deep characters in the hearts of Men, that it cannot be eraſed. Whenever, therefore, the ſtate is endangered, or its intereſt ſinking under a heavy load of Deodands, then the Supreme Being ſignifies by this natural law not only his

his conſent, but his orders, to the ſupreme Civil Magiſtrate whom he hath appointed in this caſe the ſole Interpreter of his Will, and Delegate of his Power, to take them back again, and apply them to the emolument of the common-wealth. And the Princes, in every Roman Catholick country, are either ignorant of their own power, or afraid to exert it, otherwiſe they would take more effectual means for ſecuring the common-wealth, and not ſuffer the fruits of their lands, and even their lands themſelves, to be devoured by ſuch a pitchy cloud of locuſts.

Before I cloſe this head, it will not be improper to take ſome notice of the Charity of theſe Monaſteries, becauſe our Author lays great ſtreſs upon it, and magnifies it far beyond the truth, though it doth not affect this principal objection againſt them.

" An eſtimate, ſays Mr. Phillips, may be made of their Alms from the following inſtance: Whilſt the Religious Houſes ſubſiſted, there were no proviſions made by Parliament to relieve the Poor, no aſſeſſment upon the Pariſh for that purpoſe: but at preſent this charge on the kingdom amounts, by a low computation, to above 800,000 l. a year; now

if

if we compare the annual income 135,522 l. 18 s. 10 d. which was the appraiſement of the Monaſtick Lands, with the Poor's Tax, we ſhall ſee what the nation hath gained by the Diſſolution, nor doth the different valuation of money, in thoſe and the preſent times, make any difference in the nature of the burden, as the Poſſeſſors of the Abbey-Lands would find, if this Rent-charge, which is drawn on the whole nation, was levied on them only." Pag. 223.

In order to make out this eſtimate, Mr. Phillips inſinuates, firſt, that the aſſeſſment for the Poor, by a Parliamentary Pariſh-rate, was neceſſary conſequence from the diſſolution of the Monaſteries. Secondly, that theſe Monaſteries voluntarily maintained all the Poor of the kingdom: And, laſtly, that the preſent charge of 800,000 l. was the ſame, or ſomething very like it, at this diſſolution.

It is very evident, that the Pariſh Proviſions for the Poor, were no neceſſary conſequence from the diſſolution of the Monaſteries, becauſe if it had, it muſt have been the ſame in other countries where theſe Religious Houſes underwent the ſame fate, and the Poor was as numerous: But there are no ſuch proviſions

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in Scotland, Ireland, Holland, or any Proteſtant country, except England; and even here there was no general Poor's Law enacted till the 43d year of Elizabeth, which was more than ſixty years after the demolition of the Monaſteries. The true ſtate of the caſe, with reſpect to theſe places and the Poor, I take to be this. The Poor had anciently no other proviſion but voluntary Alms: and whether theſe Religious Orders were not ſo munificent as the people, or whether they imagined what was given in Charity to them, was not to be diverted to any other uſe, I will not take upon me to determine; but from the public tranſactions it looks as if the neceſſities of the Poor were chiefly relieved by the voluntary Alms of the Laity; for through the great engroſſment of Lands by theſe Religious Orders, and their appropriation of Church Livings, the wealth of the Laity not being ſufficient for this purpoſe, the Legiſlature, in the 15th year of Richard the Second, thought it expedient, by an Act of Parliament, to oblige theſe impropriators to contribute their ſhare of Alms, and ordered their Dioceſan to aſcertain the Sum which every houſe ſhould pay yearly, as well for the relief of the Poor in their reſpective

tive Pariſhes, as for the maintenance of the Vicar who did the Parochial Duty. They were taxed only in proportion to their poſſeſſions, and by their Biſhop, who we may reaſonably preſume did not over-rate them; and the diſtribution of this Sum among their Poor was left to their own diſcretion; ſo that the only difference between them and the Laity was, they did by compulſion what theſe did voluntarily.

At the time of the diſſolution of the Monaſteries, when their poſſeſſions and impropriations of Livings went into Lay hands, this onus was not taken off, but continued till the twenty-firſt year of James the firſt, and the Poor was ſupported by it, and by charitable contributions as they were before; till through the increaſe of trade, the influx of refugees from other countries, and the taking off the embargo upon matrimony, the kingdom began, in the latter end of Queen Elizabeth's reign, to be very populous, and conſequently the poor to be more numerous: Then and not till then, the Parliament, in juſtice both to the rich and poor, thought proper to appoint officers in every pariſh, whoſe buſineſs ſhould be to provide materials, and ſet the

poor,

poor, who were able, to work upon them, and to relieve thoſe who were unable, and impower them to raiſe money for theſe purpoſes, by a fair and equal aſſeſſment upon all the pariſhioners, in proportion to their ſubſtance.

To prove the boundleſs generoſity of the Monks, Mr. Phillips ſays, that while their Houſes ſubſiſted, there were no proviſions made by Parliament to relieve the poor; whereby he gives his reader to underſtand, that all of them were maintained by their free donations; which is notoriouſly falſe: for there was an Act paſſed in the 15th of Richard the Second, another in the 4th of Henry the Fourth, a third in the 39th of Henry the Sixth, and two or three in Henry the Seventh's reign, for the relief of the poor. It is true indeed that they extended only to theſe Religious Houſes, and obliged them to aid the poor in proportion to their income; which I ſuppoſe they did, and the Laity ſupplied the reſt: from whence it may be ſeen, that the nation neither got nor loſt any thing in this reſpect by the ſuppreſſion of the Monaſteries, only the Mendicant trade was reduced, induſtry encouraged, the poor better provided for, and

the nation more equally taxed. I much queſtion, whether the preſent annual charge of keeping the poor amounts to a quarter part of 800,000 l. but ſuppoſing it to be as much, why are we to compare this ſum with the rents of the Abbey-lands at the Reformation? Or why doth our Author ſay, that the different valuation of money in thoſe and the preſent times makes no difference in the nature of the burden? unleſs he would palm upon us the moſt glaring abſurdity in the world, viz. that an income of 135,522 l. defrayed the annual expence of 800,000 l. How is it poſſible for perſons of one hundred pounds a year, to beſtow in alms ſix hundred pounds a year, unleſs they have the ſame miraculous power of multiplying loaves and fiſhes as our Saviour had, when he fed five thouſand perſons.

To conclude this head, our Author's Apology for the Monks reſts entirely upon the ſuppoſition, that they freely maintained all the poor of the kingdom; for which he hath no kind of authority from hiſtory or tradition: but according to his uſual method of arguing, hath preſumed upon the very thing which ought principally to be proved, and hath arrogantly taken for granted what no one will allow,

allow, and what every one who is the leaſt converſant in the annals of thoſe times, or hath taken any pains to examine the Acts of Parliament relative to the poor, or to inform himſelf of their maintenance, muſt know to be falſe.

LETTER XIII.

AFTER what hath been ſaid in vindication of the diſſolution of the Religious Houſes, from their exceſſive numbers and revenues, ſome perhaps will think it needleſs to add any thing more concerning them; but ſince there ſtill remains a heavier charge againſt them, I might incur the imputation of partiality to them and to our Author, if I did not ſet it forth in its proper light: the charge, I mean, is the Celibacy of the Clergy, and the prohibiting the Nuns to marry.

" About this time, ſays Mr. Phillips, the Queen iſſued out a commiſſion, by which all the married Clergy were deprived of their benefices, as being diſqualified to poſſeſs them. This inability, as extraordinary as it may now appear, was founded on the conſtant practice of the weſtern church, ever ſince the eſtabliſh-

ment of chriſtianity, and on the unanimous authority of the canons." B. ii. p. 139.

And again; "The example of the Apoſtles, the ancient uſage of the whole weſtern church, the councils and canons, had made the marriage ſtate unlawful to the ſecular Clergy, and beſides the obligations ariſing from theſe heads, the moſt ſolemn engagements had rendered it utterly inconſiſtent with the profeſſion of the Regulars." B. ii. p. 58.

The celibacy of the Clergy was not eſtabliſhed by the Holy Scriptures, for they in very expreſs terms, licence them to marry. "A Biſhop, ſaith St. Paul to Timothy, muſt be blameleſs, the huſband of one wife. Let the Deacons be the huſbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houſes well." 1 Tim. iii. 2, 12. And again in his Epiſtle to Titus i. 6. "Ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee, if any be blameleſs, the huſband of one wife, having faithful children."—"Have we not power, ſays the ſame Apoſtle to the Corinthians, to lead about a ſiſter, a wife, as well as other Apoſtles, and as the Brethren of the Lord and Cephas." 1 Cor. ix. 5. From this laſt Text it is evident, that either Paul or Barnabas,

or

or both, were married, and ſome of the Apoſtles. It is very probable likewiſe, as moſt of the fathers think, and our own liturgy in the form of matrimony expreſsly aſſerts, that the Apoſtle himſelf, from whom the Pope derives the power of the keys, was a married man.

All hiſtorians agree, that the Britons embraced the Chriſtian Religion, ſoon after our Saviour's death, though there is a very great uncertainty concerning the perſon from whom they firſt received it. In the beginning of the fifth century, the Saxons, who were then Pagans, invaded England, got a ſettlement there, and at length drove all the natives into Wales. At the cloſe of the ſixth century, forty Benedictine Monks, with Auſtin at the head of them, were ſent by Pope Gregory the Firſt, to propagate Chriſtianity in England; and theſe Miſſionaries had the good ſucceſs to convert the Saxons, and to re-eſtabliſh the Chriſtian Religion there; but there is no mention made by any Hiſtorian, eccleſiaſtical or other, of a reſtraint upon the Clergy from marrying, either among the Britons or Saxons, for near 300 years after this converſion. The firſt account we have of it is in the year 970, when Dunſtan, who had been

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Abbot of Glaſtonbury, and was promoted to the See of Canterbury, attempted, through the inſtigation of the Pope, to introduce celibacy among the Clergy, in the reigns of Edgar and Edward the Second and Martyr: but though this affair was vigorouſly proſecuted by him and the Partizans of Rome, yet it was in a great meaſure prevented by the Daniſh wars; and the Engliſh Clergy continued in a ſtate of Matrimony till the Norman conqueſt; when Pope Gregory the Seventh became more determined than any of his Predeceſſors upon eſtabliſhing this prohibition, and called a Council at Rome, in the reign of William the Conqueror, where a decree was made, forbidding the Clergy to marry, under very ſevere penalties.

It is ſaid that the Italians, French, Spaniards, and Germans at length ſubmitted to it, after long ſtruggles; but the Engliſh continued to oppoſe it: for which reaſon Lanfranc, Archbiſhop of Canterbury, a warm advocate for the Pope, convened a national Synod at Wincheſter to debate upon this ſubject, where he met with a ſtrong oppoſition. He procured indeed a decree, which obliged the Clergy in cities to put away their wives, but it did not

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extend to country Curates: and through his influence the Synod commanded, that none for the future ſhould be admitted into orders without a ſolemn declaration againſt Matrimony; but even this was not ſtrictly inſiſted on. Anſelm, the ſucceſſor of Lanfranc, both in his Biſhoprick and Principles, ſummoned a Synod at London, which condemned the marriage of Prieſts; but this did not effectually redreſs the pretended diſorder: he would have done much more towards it, had not his conteſts with Henry the Firſt, and Death, prevented him. But it was not yet every where fully eſtabliſhed, as appears from the laſt Canon in the Council of Lateran, which was held in King John's reign, and decreed, that the Prieſts who were addicted to debauchery in countries where marriage was allowed, ſhould be more ſeverely puniſhed than thoſe who lived in places where they were obliged to celibacy. Again, long after Anſelm's time, Richard, a Biſhop of Litchfield, was ſon of Robert, Biſhop of Cheſter. A Pope likewiſe about the ſame time complaining, that the Biſhop elect of Ely was not come to Rome for his confirmation, the Engliſh Ambaſſador merrily replied, that the Prelate had a very

lawful

lawful excuſe taken from the Holy Scriptures, for he had juſt married a wife: In Baronius's Annals it appears likewiſe, that a Legate, ſent by Pope Innocent III. into Poland to ſettle the celibacy of the Clergy, did at laſt carry his point: but attempting the ſame in Bohemia, he was in danger of his life. Thus, upon the whole, it is manifeſt, that this prohibition againſt Matrimony, from the firſt commencement of it in England, was very ſtrongly oppoſed for near three hundred years, and was not fully accompliſhed till the middle of the thirteenth century, or in Henry the Third's reign.

I have been the longer and more particular upon this head, that I might refute and expoſe theſe daring aſſertions of Mr. Phillips: and is it not amazing to ſee with what confidence he declares, that the prohibition of the Marriage State to the Clergy was founded upon the example of the Apoſtles and the conſtant practice or uſage of the whole Weſtern Church, ever ſince the eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity, when the ſtrenuous efforts of Dunſtan, Lanfranc, Anſelm, the Pope's Legates, and his Abettors for introducing and enforcing the celibacy of the Prieſts, and the long oppoſition

poſition it met with from the greater part of the inferior Clergy, are recorded by every Engliſh Hiſtorian that hath wrote upon the eccleſiaſtical Tranſactions of thoſe times? This ſhews what little dependence there is upon the arguments which he frequently makes uſe of, viz. the authority of all antiquity, and the doctrines and diſcipline of the Primitive Church, being on his ſide; and how cautious his readers ought to be in admitting any propoſition in his books, though delivered in the moſt peremptory manner, unleſs it be ſupported by ſome better teſtimony than his own.

The two great objects which the Church of Rome has always in view, are Riches and Power. For theſe they would compaſs Sea and Land; and with theſe keys it is eaſy to unlock their cabinet councils, and account for all their abſurd tenets. It is impoſſible to conceive what prodigious ſums of money that ſilly doctrine of a Purgatory hath brought into the Romiſh Clergy; and whilſt it continues moſt profitable, it will appear moſt plauſible to them. It might ſeem ſtrange at firſt ſight that the inſtitution of the Celibacy of the Clergy ſhould be moſt zealouſly eſpouſed, and moſt violently perſiſted in by a ſucceſſion of Popes

and Cardinals; but the wonder ceaſes, when we conſider the effect of it; how it cuts off from the Clergy all ſeparate intereſts and connections with wives and children; and how it tends to alienate the whole body of Eccleſiaſticks from the Civil Magiſtrate, and attach them to their ſovereign Pontiff, confining thereby all their views to the enriching and aggrandizing the Church.

LETTER XIV.

THE inſtitution of Nunneries was ſubſequent to, and conſequent from the celibacy of the Prieſts, for by preventing a great number of males from marrying there was of courſe a redundancy of females; and therefore it was neceſſary either to allow polygamy to the Lay-Brethren, or to tie up a proportionable number of women from marrying by vows of chaſtity. This laſt was judged moſt expedient, and conſequently put in execution. From hence came the religious order of Nuns, an excreſcence that neceſſarily ſprang from the inſtitution of the Monaſteries, and thus one abſurdity was in labour with, and brought forth another.

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But how much ſoever theſe projects may flatter the avarice and ambition of the Church of Rome, yet they are in themſelves moſt anti-chriſtian, unnatural, and, I may with juſtice add, moſt inhuman. Appetites and affections are natural inſtincts, and implanted in us for the moſt uſeful purpoſes. They have indeed their proper bounds which they ſhould not paſs, and may err both in exceſs and defect; but the total extinction of them, or the audacious attempts towards it, are counter working the deſigns of divine Providence, and fighting againſt God; it is pretending to be wiſer than infinite wiſdom, and charging our omniſcient Creator with having made what is ſuperfluous or unneceſſary in the human frame. When God formed man, he ſaid it is not good for him to be alone, that is, to herd only with perſons of his own ſex. He is imperfect and inſufficient for himſelf. I will therefore provide a help-mate for him, who ſhall be his companion, his aſſiſtant, and ſolace, through every ſtage of his being. Hence the depriving him of this help-mate is reducing him to that incomplete ſtate he was in before his creation was finiſhed: It is robbing his affections of their natural objects, and

eſtranging him from thoſe tender ſympathies which none but huſbands and parents can feel or expreſs; and without which life itſelf will be inſipid and irkſome to him. Was I not an utter enemy to perſecution, and averſe to every kind of violence which ſelf-defence did not extort from me, I ſhould think that whenever any Monks or Romiſh Prieſts were convicted of propagating theſe doctrines of celibacy and anti-marriage vows, in countries where they are forbidden, the puniſhment beſt adapted to their crime, would be the preventing them from any poſſibility of breaking their own vows, by a total exciſion of thoſe parts which they have made ſuperfluous and troubleſome to them.

——— *Non lex eſt juſtior illa,*
Quam necis artifices arte perire ſua.

The woman was made for man, for his uſe and ſervice: the whole frame both of her body and mind is peculiarly formed for the breeding, nurturing and rearing of children, or for the continuation and preſervation of her ſpecies. The ſhutting her up therefore in cloyſters, and excluding her from his company for whom ſhe was made, and from whom

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ſhe was taken, is defeating the very end of her being; it is taking her as it were, out of her element, and rendering her abſolutely uſeleſs in her generation: and as ſhe is thus become dead to her better half, to the world in general, and all the pleaſures of it, it would be better for her if ſhe was dead to all the miſeries of it, and to herſelf in particular.

Should it be ſaid for the inhibition of marriage, that the curſe which was paſſed upon our firſt parents and their poſterity is in ſome meaſure mitigated by it; for the Monks do not eat their bread by the ſweat of their face; and the Nuns have not their conception multiplied upon them, they do not bring forth children in ſorrow, their deſires are not to their huſbands, neither do they rule over them. The anſwer is obvious, that this is no general mitigation of this doom; the taking it off from one part, is only laying it the heavier upon the other: but God will not be mocked in any part, and there is no eſcaping his judgments without incurring greater. If the ground doth not bring forth thorns and thiſtles to the Monks, their minds will produce them in greater abundance, and ſlothfulneſs itſelf will prove more toiſome than the

the getting bread by their labour. The Nuns likewiſe will conceive and bring forth ſorrow in their imaginations; deſpair and melancholly will rule over them, and they will appear both to themſelves and to the world, the moſt deplorable and ſolitary objects in the creation.

And again, if this be avoiding the curſe of God, it is alſo fruſtrating his bleſſing, and diſobeying him in the firſt command he gave to mankind: for when he had created them male and female, he bleſſed them and ſaid, "Be fruitful and multiply, and repleniſh the earth." But doth not the Church of Rome ſay to their Prieſts and their Nuns, be barren, multiply not, and depopulate the earth: And the earth indeed would be depopulated, if all were to follow their example, as all have as much right; neither is the crime the leſs, that all do not follow it, for they do what lays in their power towards it: And this, when duly conſidered, is a great deal; for the number of both ſexes which theſe Religious Houſes contained at the time of their ſuppreſſion, from the loweſt of Mr. Phillips's computation, as mentioned under our firſt head, was 220,000. To this ſum muſt be added the number of ſecular

cular clergy or parochial prieſts, which was at leaſt 10,000, the ſum total therefore that had declared for a ſingle life was 230,000. Now if it be ſuppoſed that theſe perſons, from the time they made this engagement, live, one with another, or upon an average, twenty-five years, (which is ſetting the term very high) then it will follow, that by keeping this number continually full, 230,000 perſons of them will die in that period. Let it be ſuppoſed alſo, that theſe perſons had been under no reſtraint, but left at large, to marry or not, as inclination prompted them, then the conſequence would have been that though ſome might not enter into this ſtate, and ſome who would, might have no children, yet the others would have ſupplied their deficiency, and left a generation at leaſt equal to their whole number: (for otherwiſe the world would have decreaſed in its inhabitants) and this generation in like manner begetting another, down to the preſent times, there muſt have been now exiſting 230,000 perſons deriving their pedigree from this original ſtock, even ſuppoſing there had been no increaſe upon it.

Again, if 230,000 perſons had died in the firſt twenty-five years, there muſt have been

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as many taken in to have ſupplied their vacancies: and theſe in the next twenty-five years, had they the ſame liberty to marry, would alſo have had as many children, and left at this preſent time as numerous a poſterity as the former.

And the like would have happened to every other ſucceſſion. But from the general diſſolution of the Monaſteries, which was about the year 1539, or 1540, to the preſent time, is 225 years, or nine times 25 years, which would have made nine compleat ſucceſſions of 230,000 perſons in theſe Religious Houſes, had they been continued as they were, and conſequently the prohibition of marriage being taken off from theſe numbers, they have at this day as many Repreſentatives, that is, there is an increaſe of nine times 230,000, or two millions and ſeventy thouſand perſons to the nation, by the demolition of the Monaſteries, and leaving matrimony free to all; and alſo as there hath been an increaſe of two hundred and thirty thouſand births every twenty-five years, from the diſſolution of theſe Monaſteries to the preſent time, it follows that ten millions three hundred and fifty thouſand births would have been prevented if theſe Religious

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Houſes had been continued. A prodigious number indeed! but prodigious as it is, it is rather ſet too low than too high, if our Author's account of the perſons reſiding in theſe places be near the truth. With what gratitude then ought the preſent generation to look back upon the Reformers, when ſo great a ſhare of it is indebted to them for its exiſtence; and who knows but even Mr. Phillips himſelf, may owe his Being to this very ſuppreſſion, which he ſo bitterly exclaims againſt. Conſider alſo, what mighty advantages have accrued to this nation from it: Have not all its gradual improvements in ſtrength and riches from the Reformation down to the preſent times, flowed in a great meaſure from this continual multiplication of its inhabitants? and is it not from the preſent increaſe of above two millions of ſubjects, that England makes ſo conſiderable a figure in Europe? Doth it not from this ſtock ſupply its Fleets and its Armies, fill its Factories and Colonies in all parts of the world, and people immenſe territories on the continent of America, without any ſenſible diminution, or want of hands at home?

But what this kingdom hath gained by the diſſolution of the Monaſteries, France muſt have

loſt by the continuance of them; for the number of them was as great there, as it was here. The addition of two millions of inhabitants, would have ſet this ſpacious and fertile country in the moſt flouriſhing condition; and from this defect alone we may account for this northern hive not pouring forth ſuch ſwarms of people as it did in the time of the Old Romans. If France was duly ſenſible of her barren plight, ſhe would ſit like Rachel "weeping for her children, and refuſe to be comformed, becauſe they are not."

The number of Prieſts and Nuns in all other Roman Catholick Countries, where Marriage is prohibited to them, muſt at the Reformation, and ſince, have been five times more than it was in France, and conſequently there muſt be at this inſtant 10,350,000 people leſs in thoſe countries, with France included, than there would have been without any prohibition of marriage; and likewiſe as the number of births would have increaſed, had the prohibition of marriage been taken off from one million one hundred and fifty thouſand perſons, every twenty-five years for nine ſucceſſions, or from the Reformation down to the preſent time, there muſt have been fifty-one millions

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ſeven hundred and fifty thouſand births prevented in thoſe places by the continuance of it: however incredible this calculation may appear, yet it is founded upon as clear and ſtrong proofs as any propoſition in Euclid.

Laſtly, if to this infinite multitude which have been hindered from coming into the world, we could add the number which have been drove out of it, by the perſecutions of the Romiſh Church, it would ſhew, that the countries under this eſtabliſhment, have been more depopulated by it, than by all the wars, plagues, peſtilences, famines, and every other judgment with which they have been afflicted, from the inſtitution of celibacy to this preſent day. All mankind therefore ſhould look upon theſe Religious Houſes as the peſts and bane of human ſociety, and are bound, by the principles of ſelf-preſervation, to prevent and ſuppreſs them.

LETTER XV.

UNDER the three laſt heads, viz. the number, revenues, and celibacy of the Regular Clergy, ſome of the moſt material objections againſt their Religious Inſtitutions have been ſet forth, "a threefold cord, ſays the Preacher, iv. 12, is not quickly broken;" and as each of them contains arguments ſufficient of themſelves to juſtify the ſuppreſſion of the Monaſteries, their ſtrength muſt be proportionably increaſed, and rendered irrefragable by their union, by which means a principal ſubject of Mr. Phillips's book is fully anſwered, and the vindication of His Hero, in reſpect to this part of his Conduct, with the heavy charge of Rapine and Sacrilege upon the Reformers, falls to the ground.

I proceed now to conſider and examine the Romiſh Doctrines which this Author hath advanced in his Hiſtory: but as it would be endleſs to follow him through all his errors, and entering into the whole Controverſy between the Church of England and the Church of Rome; it will be ſufficient to ſingle out thoſe Doctrines and Poſitions which he hath enlarged

enlarged upon, or endeavoured to prove by ſome ſhew of argument; and the firſt that offers itſelf to me is, the prohibiting the common people from reading the Holy Scriptures.

" I am very ſenſible, ſays Mr. Phillips, the generality of this nation is ſo far prejudiced againſt Pacheco's opinion (who moved in the Council of Trent, that all tranſlations of the Scriptures into modern languages ſhould be prohibited) as to condemn the Catholick Church for having ever with-held a full liberty on this head; but, without taking upon myſelf to decide on either ſide of the queſtion, I ſhall briefly propoſe what may be alledged to juſtify this reſtraint. And firſt, in times ſo diſtant from the faith and teachable diſpoſition of the primitive Chriſtians, it may not perhaps be expedient to put indifferently into the hands of all the world thoſe ſacred oracles of which God has given the underſtanding to pure ſouls, and which the ignorant, according to St. Peter, wreſt to their own deſtruction. It may be farther urged, that it is inherent to low minds to undervalue what they have always before their eyes, and to reverence what is leſs obvious; that the wiſeſt nations have always removed the myſteries of

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religion from the approaches of the vulgar; and Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, who is the wiſdom of God, had ſo often ſpoke in parables to conceal from groſs underſtandings what he deſigned to reveal in particular to his diſciples, that in the Old and New Teſtament there are ſeveral paſſages which require great attention, knowledge and ſobriety of thought, and which it were better to leave in the learned languages; for otherwiſe they become a means of ſeduction to carnal men, who do not underſtand the things that are of God; and to proud and preſumptuous ſpirits, who imagine they underſtand what they are ignorant of." B. i. p. 356, 357.

It muſt be always expedient to put into the hands of all Chriſtians, their rule of life, and what all ought to believe and practice. The Scriptures were wrote in the languages then moſt in uſe, and beſt underſtood. Moſes uſed all prudential means to make his Statutes and his Laws as public as poſſible; he commanded the people to have them in their hearts, to teach them diligently unto their children, to talk of them when they ſat down in their houſes, and when they walked by the way, when they laid down, and when they

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roſe up; they were ordered to bind them for a ſign upon their hands, to be as frontlets between their eyes, to write them upon the poſts of their Houſes, and on their Gates. Deut. vi. 6, 7, 8. Our Saviour himſelf commanded the Jews to ſearch the Scriptures, and examine the Law and the Prophets, whether they did not teſtify of him? The Bereans we are told were more noble than the people of Theſſalonica, becauſe they ſearched the Scriptures daily, whether Jeſus was not the Chriſt, and therefore many of them believed. Acts xvii. 11. All Scripture, ſaith St. Paul, is given by inſpiration, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for inſtruction, for righteouſneſs, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furniſhed unto all good works. If Scripture then be profitable for theſe things, why ſhould not all men reap theſe profits, and prepare themſelves for good works from them? and if it be able to make me wiſe unto Salvation, why ſhould I be diſabled and reſtrained from this wiſdom? Jeſus Chriſt came down from Heaven to reveal the will of his Father to all Mankind, to publiſh to the world the doctrines of redemption, repentance, and forgiveneſs. His errand was

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to bring life and immortality to light, to ſet Heaven and Hell, infinite rewards and puniſhments, before men, and to promiſe eternal life to them who patiently continue in well doing, and threaten indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh, upon every ſoul of man that obeys not the truth, and doth evil. But to what purpoſe are theſe rewards and puniſhments ſet before me, if I am kept in ignorance of the means to obtain the one, and avoid the other? or how can I obey the truth, if it be concealed from me? If the terms of ſalvation are propoſed to me, and propoſed by inſpiration, they are certainly delivered in the beſt manner poſſible: they are plain, eaſy, and adapted to my underſtanding; for I can never ſuppoſe, that infinite wiſdom would ſet things above my capacity, which are neceſſary for me to know, and to do; and it is a ſcandalous reflection of Mr. Phillips's upon the Holy Scriptures, when he ſays, that the ſtudy of them often betrays perſons into errors, or confirms thoſe they have already imbibed. B. ii. p. 36. For it implies, that they were written with a view to deceive more than inſtruct mankind; and ſince our Saviour hath vouchſafed to diſcloſe the ſprings of eternal life, and

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called upon me to quench my thirſt at them, it is my duty to inform myſelf what thoſe ſprings contain; and I will ſhew more reſpect to him and to myſelf than to take what is of ſuch infinite concern to me from another's ciſtern; but I will go as near as I can to the fountain-head, and draw theſe living waters from the ſpring itſelf.

The great Phyſician of our Souls hath given us infallible receipts for all ſpiritual maladies; but they are medicines, and not charms, to be taken and digeſted; for if they are laid by us, or kept in the hands of another, they will be of no more ſervice to the ſick mind than a preſcription on the Apothecary's file will be to the diſtempers of the body. And he that thinks the Bible, which his Prieſt hath in his cuſtody, will entitle him to an inheritance in the kingdom of Heaven, may as well lay claim to the whole world, becauſe his neighbour hath a map of it in his houſe.

Our Saviour preached publickly: "He that hath ears, ſays he, to hear, let him hear." His Diſciples were mean illiterate perſons, and he ſuited his diſcourſes to them. He ſpoke indeed ſometimes in parables, but it was to the Scribes and Elders of the Jews, who were

prejudiced againſt him, and wanted to enſnare him in his talk: but he always explained them to his Diſciples; not to a part of them, but to all who believed in him, and kept nothing ſecret from them; "I thank thee, O Father, ſays he, that thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe, and revealed them unto babes." It by no means follows, therefore, that the people ſhould not be permitted to read the Holy Scriptures, becauſe Chriſt talked in parables to the Phariſees. There are no parables in them without their explication: the hiſtory of his life and doctrines, as recorded in the four Goſpels, was wrote in the plaineſt ſtyle, in the vulgar tongue, ſubmitted to the peruſal of all perſons, and ordered to be publickly read in all the churches. Though there may be ſeveral paſſages in the Old and New Teſtament which require great attention, knowledge and ſobriety of thought, yet, what then? Is that any reaſon why it ſhould be better to leave them in the learned languages? Do they there require leſs attention, or leſs knowledge or thought? Is not this enhancing the difficulty and the pains to get at the ſenſe of them? May not carnal minds learn theſe languages as well as others, and will they not then prove as much

much a means of ſeduction as if they had been tranſlated into the modern languages? But if there be paſſages requiring great attention and knowledge, then let them be commented upon by ſkilful perſons; and by a natural ſolution rendered intelligible and eaſy to perſons of all capacities.

LETTER XVI.

IN St. Paul's Epiſtles there are ſome things hard to be underſtood, which they that are unlearned and unſtable wreſt, as they do all the other Scriptures, unto their own deſtruction; but yet the Apoſtle made no exception to his readers, his Epiſtles were general, and to be communicated to all the members of the church they were directed to. "I charge you by the Lord, ſays he to the Theſſalonians, that this Epiſtle be read to all the holy Brethren." 1 Theſſ. v. 27. There is no arguing againſt the uſe of a thing from the abuſe of it: Our Author himſelf can ſee this in other caſes, and hath obſerved, "that if ſome learned men have been juſtly charged with the abuſe and miſapplication of their talents, and other more capital diſorders, theſe

can with no more equity be imputed to learning than the wanderings and wrecks of wilful and obſtinate Pilots to the invention of the compaſs, and the art of navigation." B. i. p. 10. And by analogy of reaſon, as the uſe of the needle and quadrant, and the obſervation of the celeſtial luminaries, ſhould not be prohibited to Mariners, though ſome have been caſt away through their miſmanagement of them; ſo the uſe of the Bible, and the ſtudy of the Holy Scriptures, ſhould be left free to all who would ſteer their courſe by them, through the waves of this world, to their deſired haven in the next, though ſome have made ſhipwreck of their faith, and have periſhed through the perverſion of them.

The great book of nature is laid open to all the world, wherein are both great and ſmall characters, things eaſy, hard, and incomprehenſible; yet every man hath full liberty to look into it, to examine and make what obſervations he pleaſes upon it. Why then ſhould not the book of Revelation be laid as open before us? There is an abſurdity in the very ſuppoſition of a revealed ſubject being hidden from us: It is thwarting our Saviour's intentions in his publication of the Goſpel,

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and ſuppreſſing the tidings of great joy which were proclaimed by his Angel to all people. If reading the Holy Scriptures be ſo pernicious to the lower claſs of mankind as to endanger their ſalvation, the moſt effectual means to prevent it would be to hinder them from learning to read at all; and as eternal happineſs is the one thing needful, and to which all other are to give way, the purſuit of it will certainly juſtify the prohibition of whatever interferes with or obſtructs it: This perhaps the Romiſh Clergy would be glad to do, was it not too groſs an impoſition for the Laity to ſubmit to; and indeed I am at a loſs how to account for their ſubmitting to be kept as they are in the dark with reſpect to the Holy Scriptures; unleſs cuſtom hath the ſame influence over them as I have heard it hath over the inhabitants under or near the Pole, who having been inured to night half the year, would willingly have it continued the other half, and regret the return of the ſun. This puts me in mind of a ſtory which I have ſomewhere met with, and as it is ſhort and pertinent to the preſent ſubject, I will take the liberty of troubling my reader with it. A Clown, ſeeing a fellow ſtanding in the pillory, aſked the perſon next

to him, what that was in black and white on the top of the pillory? Being told it was forgery, the crime for which he was put there. Forgery, continues he, what's that? It is counterfeiting another man's hand-writing, replied his neighbour. There now, ſays he, this comes of your writing and reading: I thank God and my friends, for keeping me from ſchool, and preventing this crime from hanging over my head.——When the Laity of the Church of Rome ſhall ſee thoſe who have wreſted the Holy Scriptures to their deſtruction aſſigned over to their proper puniſhment, they may perhaps hug themſelves, and bleſs their ſpiritual guides for ſaving them from this danger. But ſhould they turn themſelves to the other ſide, and behold thoſe faithful ſtewards who have learned from the Scriptures to be wiſe unto ſalvation, they will find more reaſon to curſe their Prieſts for depriving them of the opportunities of improving their talents, and entering with their fellow ſervants into the joy of their Lord.

The abſolute intrinſick worth of any thing is never increaſed by being concealed, and where its worth flows from its utility to mankind, it becomes the more valuable for being

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the more known: Whilſt a reputed character, if it exceeds the truth, is not to be deſired, and if it falls ſhort of it, is to be contemned. If men will make a falſe eſtimation, the fault is in them, and not in the things; and though it be inherent in low minds to undervalue what they have always before their eyes, and to reverence what is leſs obvious, yet we muſt not think of raiſing the imaginary value of any thing, by ſinking its real uſe, nor mind incuring undeſerved contempt, when the avoiding it eclipſes native glory. The ſun continues to ſhine, however the birds of night may be offended at it: and gold without uſe is no better than droſs; but it loſes nothing of its intrinſick worth, and ſeldom any thing of its reputed value, by its general currency. Our Saviour did not ſecrete himſelf from the world to create a reverence for himſelf, but he went about doing good, he frequented public places, and converſed with perſons of all conditions: And though his diſcourſes and his works were undervalued, and even blaſphemed by low minds, yet he did not deſiſt from their publication. The real myſteries of Religion are above our comprehenſions, and by their own nature removed from the approaches of mankind:

kind: But no wiſe nations ever made myſteries in true Religion, which were not ſuch of themſelves. Sacred and moral truths are not of that glow-worm nature to ſhine only in the dark, but like diamonds they will ſparkle in the ſun-ſhine, and be the more eſteemed for being the more ſeen. Some crafty Politicians indeed have conſidered Religion only as an engine of State, and through its means have endeavoured to impoſe upon the credulity of the populace? but it is the part only of weak, ſuperſtitious, or deſigning perſons to deal in myſteries, and the offerings of the wiſe are infinitely more acceptable than the adoration of fools. What is there that the Prieſt knows which is not fit to be communicated to the People, unleſs it be deluſion and impoſture? The Egyptian Prieſts kept their Gods from vulgar inſpection, becauſe they had deified the moſt contemptible things; the moſt offenſive and noxious animals, and the meaneſt vegetables and minerals were enſhrined in their temples. The Pagan Oracles amuſed the people with ambiguous anſwers, and kept them at a diſtance, leſt by too near an approach their impoſitions ſhould be diſcovered, and their ignorance expoſed; and moſt of the Heatheniſh

theniſh Rites, which the Adepts were initiated into, and have been ſince diſcloſed, were abſurd or ridiculous, or a ſcandal to human nature: It is a ſhrewd ſign that things, eſpecially of a religious kind, are worthleſs in themſelves, which muſt be beholden to ignorance for their valuation. If the Canons and Conſtitutions of the Church of Rome; if the deciſions of councils, and the decrees of their Italian Oracle, are conſonant with the written Oracles of God, why is not their harmony diſplayed, and theſe original authorities produced, as collateral confirmations of their doctrines? If theſe pure ſouls, who have the gift of underſtanding the Scriptures, don't care to ſubmit them to the peruſal of the common people, is there not great reaſon to ſuſpect that they bear hard upon their eccleſiaſtical Inſtitutions? And we who are converſant in the inſpired Writings know this to be the truth. They are aſhamed of their unſcriptural traditions, and are afraid, leſt the Laity ſhould find them contradicted by the Word of God. They have forbid the reading of the Bible, becauſe impure ſouls would there ſee the ſecond Commandment prohibiting, to their groſs conceptions, the worſhipping of Images and Relicts, as practiced in

the Church of Rome: they would alſo ſee the with-holding the cup from the Laity to be directly contrary to our Lord's inſtitution of that Sacrament, and that no licences to ſin ſhould be granted, nor any reſtraints laid upon the Clergy from marrying; and laſtly, they would ſee their High Prieſt brought down on a level with other Biſhops, and ſeveral corruptions and abominations in their Church condemned in the Holy Scriptures.

LETTER XVII.

THE next ſubject that offers itſelf to our examination from this Hiſtory is the Right of Private Judgment, and the Unity of the Church. "Poland, Mr. Phillips ſays, was ſo giddy with a continual Rotation, that the Synod of Scrinia came to this wild reſolution, of allowing every one to believe as he thought proper." And again, "The Proſelites of the new ſects were allowed to be arbitrators of their own Belief; and though no pretenſion could be more abſurd, yet it flattered their vanity, and left them at large to prophecy ſmooth things to every corruption of their hearts." B. i. p. 329, 331.

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However wild this reſolution might appear to our Author, yet a reſolution of not allowing every one to believe as he thought proper would have been infinitely more extravagant: for by what means ſhall he be hindered? Belief is the perſuaſion of the mind, founded upon conviction; and whatever a man is convinced of, that he will think moſt proper to believe: now how will this conviction be prevented? The mind is not the object of compulſion; there is no looking into it, nor knowing what paſſes there but by what comes out of it; and if there was, it is out of the reach of all external power. Thoughts are both ſecret and free, and every one may think as he pleaſes; and conſequently his conviction and belief will depend upon his pleaſure. This is the Prerogative of a Rational and Intelligent Being: Man was endowed with Underſtanding, and inveſted with Liberty and Free-will, on purpoſe that he ſhould be maſter of himſelf, and exert theſe powers chiefly in things which moſtly concern him, in ſentiments of Piety and Gratitude to his Maker, of Juſtice and Benevolence to his Neighbour, and of Temperance and Moderation to himſelf.

The right therefore of Private Judgment, of chuſing and determining for one's ſelf in Religious and Moral Subjects, is a Natural Privilege exempt from all external violence, abſolute and uncontroulable; and as we are dependent only upon ourſelves, it is incumbent upon us to take care of ourſelves, and to maintain this freedom, by ſearching into the Scriptures and uſing all proper means for the knowledge of the Truth, that we may eſtabliſh juſt principles within us, and direct our conviction right. Since God hath made us men, it is our principal duty to conſider and ſhew ourſelves men, to appear the moſt like Reaſonable Beings before the God of Reaſon, to aſſert this natural Liberty towards our fellow Creatures, and to approve ourſelves to our own minds.

The Proſelites of the new Sects, ſays our Author, were allowed to be the Arbitrators of their own Belief. It would be hard indeed if men would not allow this Arbitration to one another, which God hath given to every man, and is inſeparable from him: and even ſuppoſing the Romiſh Church had the gift of Inſpiration, and the Governors of it were infal-

lible,

lible, yet this would not cancel or abridge the right of private Judgment, becauſe it is an eſſential property flowing from our underſtanding, and cannot be taken from us without deſtroying our very nature. He who is the Fountain of Infallibility and Power, and conferred this right upon us, doth not offer to withdraw or ſuſpend it, when he himſelf condeſcends to converſe or expoſtulate with us; but he expects us to aſſert it, and even appeals to human Arbitration for the Juſtice of his proceedings with mankind.

If therefore any Members of the Church of Rome be Infallible, they ſhould prove their Infallibility, not by attempting impoſſibilities, but by adapting themſelves to the capacities of their inferiors, and by laying before them ſuch clear demonſtrations of knowledge, and ſtrong arguments for conviction, as would overpower their judgment, and force their aſſent. This is the only violence that can be offered to rational minds, and is conſiſtent with their natural privileges. But no pretenſion can be more abſurd than for fallible and frail mortals to claim more power than what the Almighty hath thought fit to take upon himſelf; and ſurely nothing can be more preſumptuous than

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for men to deny their Fellow Creatures their Rights of Thinking, Reaſoning, or Judging, and to engroſs them to themſelves. And laſtly every man muſt be proud of being delivered from the tyranny of ſuch Uſurpers, reſtored to the free exerciſe of the Powers which God hath inveſted him with, and left accountable to him alone for the hard or ſmooth things he might prophecy to himſelf from them.

Since then it cannot be ſuppoſed, that the Synod of Scrinia ſhould only intend to allow what was out of their power to refuſe, the reſolution they came to muſt be, to tolerate a public profeſſion of every one's belief. And where was the wildneſs of this reſolution? If every one had a power to believe for himſelf, why ſhould any one be debarred from the declaration of his faith? The free communication of our thoughts to one another, is the beſt method of mutual inſtruction; this is the proper uſe of ſpeech; and the natural right of believing for ourſelves, entitles us to the application of all the means of perfecting this belief: and as this is the one thing needful, we may, nay we ought to converſe, confer, and argue upon points of faith and practice, in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon; with the learned,

ed, and with the unlearned; and it is incumbent upon all, to be aiding and aſſiſting each other with their informations on theſe ſubjects. Did not our Saviour appeal to mens ſenſes and underſtandings, with the proofs of his divine miſſion? Did he not ſuppoſe the right of private judgment, when he preached to perſons of all conditions, and endeavoured to ſatisfy them of the truth of his Doctrines? Though he had all power given him, in heaven and in earth, yet he did not pretend to be the arbitrator of any man's faith, without convincing his judgment; neither did he deny the privilege of believing as every one thought proper; but by the power of his wiſdom he brought them to believe as he thought proper, and by ſpeaking as never man ſpake, and with arguments that no one could anſwer, he compelled their aſſent, and drew all men after him. In like manner, the Apoſtles addreſſed themſelves to mens underſtandings: Their loins were girt about with truth, and they had on the breaſtplate of righteouſneſs: None were able to reſiſt the wiſdom of St. Stephen, nor the ſpirit by which he ſpake: And when St. Paul made Felix tremble, it was by the force of his reaſoning upon righteouſneſs, temperance, and judgment

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to come. The Chriſtian Religion made its way in the world by the purity of its doctrines, and the ſimplicity of the manners of its profeſſors. And how do even the preſent Miſſionaries of the Church of Rome propagate their Religion among the infidel nations, when they are not armed by the ſecular power? Or how did their famous Jeſuit or Saint, Francis Xavier, convert the Indians in the Eaſt; or their Miſſionary and Saint, Lewis Bertrand, enlighten the Indians in the Weſt? Was it not by laying before them the plaineſt truths of the Goſpel, ſuch as are ſuited to the loweſt capacities, and endeavouring to convince them from the firſt principles of morality of the errors of their ways, and of the truth of the Chriſtian Religion? and had they had nothing more to communicate to them they might have ſafely reſted their cauſe here, and could not have failed of ſucceſs; but as they built upon this foundation, hay and ſtubble, or the traditionary rubbiſh of their Church, they found it neceſſary to have recourſe to artificial expedients, and attempted to betray the Indians into a belief of their Doctrines by falſe miracles, yet ſtill this was an appeal to their ſenſes: and theſe miſſionaries were obliged to

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open the eyes of thoſe people by the natural light which was ſtill retained, becauſe they were deſtitute of all compulſive power. Force therefore was impracticable, and would it not have been a moſt prepoſterous method of making proſelites, to have told them that they were a pack of blockheads and fools, without ſenſe or underſtanding; that they muſt not be talked to as men, but drove like brute creatures into the church, and there muſt believe whatever their Prieſt ſhould dictate to them, and do whatever he ſhould command them? Theſe would have been ſuch groſs inſults upon the common ſenſe of mankind, that the moſt barbarous nations would have ſpurned at ſuch rude treatment: Men are not to be ſtript of their reaſon at once; it muſt be craftily and gradually taken from them. They, who have any ſuch deſign, ſhould take vice for their example; they ſhould firſt make uſe of reaſon itſelf, and gently lead it on from one infatuation to another: Men muſt not be let into theſe profound ſecrets till they are prepared for their admiſſion, and are become adepts fit to be initiated into the myſteries of their Religion. It was therefore moſt impolitic in our Author, and nothing but his zeal can excuſe

his temerity, in divulging theſe private articles to a free people, who are extremely zealous of their natural rights: and ſurely no Proteſtant in his ſenſes will ever be prevailed upon to quit his Religion, when he muſt loſe his underſtanding by the change, ſurrender up the uſe of his judgment, extinguiſh the light of his mind, and blindly follow ſpiritual guides more blind than himſelf.

LETTER XVIII.

THE Pretence of the Romiſh Hierarchy for diſallowing private Judgment, and exacting an implicit Faith in, and an unlimited Obedience to all their decrees is, the Unity of the Church.

"The Chriſtian Faith, ſays Mr. Phillips, which has the ſource of truth for its Author, partakes of the unity of its Divine Origin, which cannot be divided, and that any diſcord would be the deſtruction of the whole. And again, the members of her own Communion will, above all others, find motives of acquieſcence in the guidance of a church which they perceive to be ſtill the ſame, amidſt all thoſe changes which ſurround and paſs before her, that

that her unerring light is at once clear, unchanged, and univerſal, and has in every age imparted the rules of belief and action to all who have any claim to a ſucceſſion from the Apoſtles, and been the ſource and teſt of every rightful tenet, that, like the ſoul which feeds the whole frame with ſpirits, ſupplies it with vigour, directs each motion, and ſuſtains every nerve; this divine direction has provided not only nations and provinces, but individuals, with ſpiritual ſupplies ſuited to all their neceſſities." B. i. p. 422, 423.

Every Proteſtant acknowledges a perfect rule of faith and practice, as well as the Papiſts; the difference between them is, the firſt aſſerts the Holy Scriptures to be that rule, and the other ſuppoſes it to be framed in a great meaſure by his church, which he believes to be continually inſpired by the Holy Spirit and directed into all truth.

The uncertainty among the Romaniſts themſelves where to place this infallibility is a demonſtration of there being none; for if there was any, it would ſoon manifeſt itſelf, and among the moſt fallible creatures would immediately diſtinguiſh thoſe who were endowed with it. The contrary decrees of their Coun-

cils, and their Popes, and the palpable errors adopted by their Church, are undeniable proofs of its fallibility. But waving this conſideration at preſent, and ſuppoſing, if it could be, that both Churches have a perfect rule, with the ſource of truth for its Author, it would moſt certainly partake of the unity of its divine origin, and any diſcord in it would be the deſtruction of the whole; that is, if there was any inconſiſtency in it, it could not be a perfect rule. And it alſo follows that all men ought to ſubmit to, and walk by, this perfect rule. But the queſtion ſtill returns, How ſhall they be brought to this ſubmiſſion? Is there any other way than by inſtruction, perſuaſion and conviction? Chriſt, who was both Omniſcient and Omnipotent, preſcribed only this, and perhaps it is impoſſible to uſe any other conſiſtently with the liberty of a Rational Being. But this was far from being ſufficient to procure, or preſerve, an uniformity of opinions, for from the different tempers, inclinations, infirmities and corruptions of mankind, there could not but be an infinite diverſity of ſentiments, and endleſs deviations from this perfect rule. I hear, ſaith St. Paul to the Corinthians, that there be diviſions among you, and I partly

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believe it, for there muſt be hereſies among you; that is, it cannot be otherwiſe, it is impoſſible in the nature of things to prevent them; and though our Saviour, his Apoſtles, and the Primitive Fathers, never attempted to bring men to one mind but by convincing their judgments, yet contrary to all theſe examples, and to the impoſſibility of the thing itſelf, the Church of Rome hath undertaken by other methods to compaſs this unity of opinion: in the firſt place they ſet themſelves up as the arbitrator's of every man's faith, and came to a reſolution of not ſuffering any one to have any judgment of his own, or to believe as he thought proper: then they publiſhed canons or rules of faith, and under the ſevereſt penalties extorted an outward profeſſion of them; but here their power ended, they could go no farther towards deſtroying private judgments, they could not reach the heart, nor eſtabliſh any faith there. They might therefore bring men to diſſemble their thoughts and make them hypocrites, but they did not make them chriſtians: external Religion might by this means become a ſubject not of choice but of compulſion, and every perſon was in ſome manner obliged to take what was preſcribed him, but this was not

not properly his own, it was the Religion of his Country; and for the ſame reaſon that he profeſſed Chriſtianity, he would have profeſſed the Jewiſh, Mahometan, or Pagan Religion, had either of them been thus forcibly eſtabliſhed where he was born. But though the Church of Rome could not bring men to think or judge as they would have them, yet they brought them not to think or judge at all; for their reſtraint upon the tongue cut off all the means of information; and as diſcourſe upon religious topicks was extremely dangerous, it became at length a general maxim among all ranks of people, not to trouble themſelves with, or to have any thoughts concerning it. Thus the Church prevented a diverſity of opinions by leaving none, and inſtead of bringing all men to one mind, they ſuppreſſed all minds: the very life and ſoul of Religion was deſtroyed, and nothing remained but the bare profeſſion, the mere outſide tinſel ſhew, and the glittering pomp and pageantry of it.

The means likewiſe which they uſed were no leſs unnatural and anti-chriſtian than ineffectual, for preſerving unity of opinion. "The members of her Communion, ſays our Author, will

will above all others find motives of acquieſcence in the guidance of a church which they perceive to be ſtill the ſame." They will find indeed motives of acquieſcence with their church which are not in any other; motives from dungeons, inquiſitions, racks, tortures, fire, and all the direſt cruelties that deſperate revenge or malice can furniſh incenſed avarice and ambition with. Motives of acquieſcence which operate, not as Circe's wand did, by a charm upon the companions of Ulyſſes; but by terrors, ſuch as Erynnis ne'er could raiſe, nor fear conceive. Men were deprived of the uſe of their underſtandings; which they could not but deſpair of ever recovering, as they perceived their church always preſſing theſe motives with the ſame unrelenting fury. Herein was our Saviour's prophecy verified, when he ſaid, think not that I am come to ſend peace on earth, I am not come to ſend peace on earth, but a ſword. He preached indeed the Goſpel of peace, and his principal errand was to reconcile God to Men, and men to one another; and to eſtabliſh the doctrines of univerſal benevolence. The diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of his diſciples, was love; they were not to reſiſt their adverſaries, but rather

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to turn their cheeks to the ſmiter; and inſtead of putting a ſword into the hands of the Defenders of the Faith, he came to put meekneſs, forbearance and forgiveneſs into their hearts, and to order that no difference in opinions ſhould make any breach in their affections. But he knew, that in after ages ſome men would ſet themſelves up as his vicegerents, and others as the ſucceſſors of his apoſtles, who would change his ſpiritual into a temporal kingdom, and transform his whole ſcheme of benevolence into a plan for monopolizing wealth and power, and aggrandizing themſelves. He ſaw with the eye of prophecy his pretended vicars come forth with power and ſigns, with lying wonders and all the deceiveableneſs of unrighteouſneſs; having myſtery wrote in their foreheads, and a cup in their hands, full of abominations. He ſaw them drunk with the blood of the ſaints; and under colour of peopling heaven, making the earth deſolate; his prophetic ſpirit ſet before him holy leagues giving ſanction to the moſt horrid maſſacres; and croiſades undertaken for the recovery of the Holy Land: he ſaw an order of Knights-errant fighting under his banners; who were ſworn enemies to peace,

and

and had vowed perpetual war with infidels, he ſaw likewiſe another religious order of men profeſſing the ſimplicity of the Goſpel, and under the veil of his Holy Name practiſing all kinds of diſſimulation, perfidy, and cunning craftineſs to deceive; ſtruck with theſe monſtrous ſights, he declared that the Prince of Peace was come to ſend a ſword upon earth: and if a judgment was to be formed of Chriſtianity from theſe propagators of it, it muſt be inferred, that a ſpirit of perſecution was the ſpirit of his religion; that his injunctions, like Draco's laws, were wrote in blood, and not with ink; that malevolence to all, but moſt eſpecially to one another, was the mark of his diſciples, who appeared to breathe nothing but threatnings and ſlaughter, and to be ſent to deſtroy mens lives, and not to ſave them.

LETTER XIX.

THOUGH violence was abſolutely neceſſary for the preſervation of the unity of the Romiſh Church, and the whole polity of that Eccleſiaſtical State was founded upon it; and though it hath been conſtantly practiſed in every country, where this hath been the eſtabliſhed Religion, and for its ſake alone, for many centuries; yet our author hath the aſſurance to declare, that his church never made any uſe of it, and that her puniſhments extend no farther than to the ſpiritual ſtate of the offender. The facts indeed in Queen Mary's reign, and during the time that Pole was Legate and Archbiſhop, were too glaring to be denied: but he endeavours to palliate them, and to throw them entirely off from the church upon the ſtate. "The biſhops, he ſays, were men of great moderation, and averſe to ſuch meaſures, except Bonner, and a very few more: ſome leading perſons about the court ſeem to have countenanced theſe meaſures, as neceſſary to ſecure the government: Philip's behaviour afterwards in the Low Countries, where the Duke of Alva

by

by his orders put ſuch numbers to death, make it not improbable, that he favoured proceedings which for political reaſons he would be thought to diſapprove; as for the Queen, no one will wonder that her fondneſs for a huſband twelve years younger than herſelf, and her attachment, not only to his perſon but his family, from which ſhe was deſcended by her mother, ſhould cauſe her to aſſent to what he was inclined to; ſomething likewiſe muſt be given to the times." b. ii. p. 165, 166.

The Queen, Gardiner, Bonner, and the greater part of the Miniſtry, were furious bigots, all principals, and nearly equally concerned in theſe violent proceedings: But when they found them to be exceedingly unpopular, and that the nation in general was diſguſted at them, every one denied that he was the author of them, and endeavoured to ſhift them off from himſelf upon the others. Our author acknowledges, that there were 270 perſons burnt for hereſy, during this reign: But the leaſt number that all our Hiſtorians mention is 284; and ſome of them aſſert, that there were no leſs than 800 who underwent this fiery trial. Our author's account of the perſons burnt in the dioceſes of York, Wells,

Exeter, Lincoln, Peterborough, Ely, Briſtol, Saliſbury, Oxford, Glouceſter, Worceſter, and Hereford, and in the four Welch dioceſes, is copied from Heylin; but there is not the leaſt authority, that I can find, for his ſaying, that not one was put to death in the dioceſe of Canterbury, after Cardinal Pole was promoted to that ſee; and I here call upon him to produce his authority for it; for it is generally agreed, that the perſecution, after Cranmer's death, chiefly raged in Bonner's dioceſe and in Kent: And Fox aſſures us, that five perſons were burnt for hereſy, in the city of Canterbury, about a week before the Queen's death. It is allowed alſo, on all hands, that the Queen herſelf was of a gloomy and zealous temper, and was doubtleſs the principal cauſe of all theſe flaming meaſures, which Mr. Phillips here ſeems to allow, and endeavours to apologize for; yet in the character which he gives of her afterwards, he ſays, that ſhe was far from a ſanguinary diſpoſition, and would have been worthy of the higheſt commendations, had as few acts of cruelty been done under her reign as were done by her. B. ii. p. 209. though they could not be done without her approbation, and were chiefly done by her

her ſpecial order and commiſſion. And farther to extenuate theſe cruelties, he adds, they neither began nor ended with this Princeſs: But far from retaliating this objection on her ſucceſſor, who made actions of mere religious import, treaſon and felony, and puniſhed thoſe who performed them accordingly; I would chooſe to treat this ſubject in ſuch a manner, as to cover heats, not ſpread and perpetuate them, p. 166. And well he may chooſe it, when he cannot but be ſenſible, that this is no ſeaſon for him to blow up flames, and that his cauſe muſt be greatly prejudiced by being involved in ſuch an unequal compariſon; for there were not above two or three perſons who ſuffered death upon account of religion in Edward the Sixth's time; and even theſe muſt be attributed more to the rage of an exaſperated party, than to the principles of the Reformation, which diſclaims all violence. And Queen Elizabeth took direct contrary meaſures to what her Siſter had done, in that long and peaceable reign; her ſubjects were gently led into the Church of England; the houſe of God was filled, not by compulſion, but by perſuaſion and argument. The Proteſtant Religion was eſtabliſhed with no other conſtraint,

than

than by obliging the Clergy to quit their Benefices, who would not conform to the new Liturgy; and by puniſhing thoſe malecontents, who fomented ſedition and inſurrections in the State, according to the nature of their crimes, with as much lenity as the order and ſecurity of the Kingdom would permit. When therefore the reign of Mary ſtands ſo remarkably diſtinguiſhed for its fires and faggots, between the two mild and pacifick reigns of Edward and Elizabeth, is it any wonder, that our fathers, and our father's fathers, have tranſmitted to us, or that we ſhould deliver down to our children the bloody reign of Queen Mary? or that it ſhould continue, to the lateſt poſterity, to be the diſmal ditty of every nurſery? Well therefore might Mr. Phillips be willing to draw a veil over it, and to wave the conſideration of theſe facts, by putting the iſſue of his cauſe upon ſpeculative points; but here he will meet with no better ſucceſs.

I muſt aſk the reader's leave, ſays he, to add a few reflections, which will elucidate the ſtate of the queſtion, and belong to this part of Cardinal Pole's Hiſtory no leſs than the facts themſelves. I have already ſhewn, that what

gave

gave occaſion to enact penal laws againſt hereticks in former reigns, and to renew them in this, was the open rebellion againſt the government to which this licentiouſneſs of opinions gave birth, as well as to the manifeſt ſubverſion of the Catholick Doctrine, p. 166.

It is very manifeſt indeed, that the allowing every Chriſtian the free uſe of his Bible, to judge for himſelf, and to make a public profeſſion of his faith, would ſubvert the Roman Catholick Doctrine; but it is very far from being manifeſt, that this Liberty, which our Author is pleaſed to ſtigmatize with the opprobrious name of licentiouſneſs, gave birth to open rebellion againſt the government.

There is nothing in the nature of the Chriſtian Religion, as profeſſed by the Proteſtants, that hath the leaſt tendency to ſtir up faction, or rebellion in the State; and in general, long experience hath confirmed to them this political maxim concerning Religion, that the only effectual way of maintaining the peace and proſperity of the kingdom is, a free toleration for all perſons to chooſe and profeſs whatever Religious Doctrines they think proper, provided they are not inconſiſtent with the fundamental principles of ſociety,

or

or the civil Rights and Liberties of its Members: and Proteſtaniſm in particular ſtrengthens the natural obligations of humanity, and diſtinguiſhes its Diſciples for the moſt peaceable and uſeful ſubjects. We are commanded by our rule of Faith, to ſubmit ourſelves to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's ſake, and to look upon the Civil Magiſtrate as the Miniſter of GOD to us for good, and a Revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil; wherefore we muſt needs be ſubject, not only for wrath, but for conſcience ſake; and as the behaviour of the primitive Chriſtians was exactly conformable to theſe precepts, ſo might the Proteſtants, as Proteſtants, both before and in the days of Queen Mary, have pleaded with St. Paul, "that they were no movers of ſedition, nor found to raiſe up the people, but only in the way which is called Hereſy; ſo worſhip they the God of their Fathers, believing all things in the law, and in the Goſpel."

LETTER XX.

IT is well known that the Biſhops and Clergy were the firſt contrivers and promoters of the penal laws againſt Hereticks; they had ſet their hearts upon them, and were reſolved to leave no ſtone unturned to carry them; and as they were an exceeding large body of people, poſſeſſed of half the lands of the kingdom, granted their ſubſidies to the King, and had their Repreſentatives in Parliament, they could not but have a mighty influence upon the Legiſlators, which they never ceaſed to exert with all their power. The firſt violent ſtatute againſt Hereticks, in Richard the Second's reign, was enacted by their intereſt alone; and Henry the Fourth, wanting ſome favour from the Clergy, paſſed that famous, or rather infamous Statute, "*De Heretico comburendo*," purely to engratiate himſelf with them, who were not to be ſatisfied without it, and were more importunate with him for burning Wickliffians, than the Jews were for crucifying Jeſus Chriſt, with Pontius Pilate: ſo that though theſe ſtatutes were the laws of the Realm, they were properly the acts of the

Hierarchy, who were the primary and efficient cauſes of them. The Civil Magiſtrates were no other than their inſtruments, whom they uſed as their Cats-Paw, not to take things out, but to them into the fire; and when their ends were anſwered, they left the Magiſtrates to bear the whole charge of perſecution, and with a moſt Jeſuitical evaſion, denied that they had any hand in it.—" This Licentiouſneſs, ſays our Author, cauſed the Legiſlature to conſider Hereſy not only as a grievous ſin againſt Almighty God, but as a heinous crime againſt the State; and as the cognizance of it belonged to the Church, Biſhops were required to examine thoſe who were accuſed of it, and if they were found guilty, to deliver them over to the ſecular power; but it muſt be obſerved, that theſe Statutes are Laws of the Engliſh Realm, not Canons of the Catholick Church, and no more make part of her Faith and Diſcipline, than the hardſhips Debtors undergo in our common goals, or the ſame puniſhment being aſſigned to murder, and to the larceny of five ſhillings can be imputed to the Church of England." B. ii. p. 167.

Though theſe ſanguinary laws were never made but in Roman Catholic countries, and there

there only where the Clergy bore the chiefeſt ſway, yet ſuch is their gratitude to the temporal Magiſtrate, that when he hath done, or rather been compelled to do, their dirty work for them, they accuſed and pelted him for it; and the compariſon which our Author makes uſe of between Hereſy, and Debts or Larceny, is very improper and unfair, for he allows Hereſy to be a fit ſubject for an Epiſcopal Inquiſition; the whole proceſs is of an eccleſiaſtical nature, the impriſonment likewiſe of the Heretick, with his other Puniſhments, makes a part of the diſcipline of the Church of Rome, and therefore they have a very cloſe connection with it; but Debts or Larcenies are purely temporal cauſes, wholly appropriated to the civil Courts, and conſequently have no kind of relation to, or connection with, the Church of England.

Again, the Catholick Church, he ſays, is ſo far from adjudging Hereticks to corporal puniſhment, much leſs to death, that all her criminal proceedings againſt ſuch as are accuſed of Hereſy ceaſe, when the cauſe is cleared up; and her puniſhments extend no farther than the ſpiritual ſtate of the offender. I ſhall exemplify this in as ſolemn an inſtance of the Church's Juriſdiction as the caſe admits, and exerted by a

Pope as zealous of his prerogative as ever filled the Pontifical Throne; this was Paul the IVth, who in his decree of Cranmer's condemnation, which is directed to Philip and Mary, only requires them to deal with him after he is delivered to the ſecular court as the law directs. B. ii. p. 167.

Mr. Phillips may aſſert what he pleaſes, or what he thinks will beſt make for his cauſe, but he will never convince any Proteſtant, that violence and perſecution make no part of the faith and diſcipline of the Church of Rome; and I believe no Layman, even of that communion, will have the aſſurance to join with our Author in declaring, that the Catholic Church is far from adjudging Hereticks to corporal puniſhment. Have not their chief pontiff, and the whole college of Cardinals, with the concurrence of all their Clergy, ſet up an inquiſition in every country where it was in their power? Is not this an entire eccleſiaſtical court, under the ſole or principal direction of the Pope? Perhaps our author may quibble upon the word adjudging, but if the inquiſitors do not adjudge, they do what is worſe, they put Hereticks without judgment to corporal puniſhments, and ſuch exquiſite puniſhments

as

as the moſt furious bigots have tortured their imaginations to invent, and ſteeled their hearts to inflict. The whole proceſs of that iniquitous court ſeems to be founded upon maxims directly contrary to all the rules of natural juſtice: the criminal neither knows his accuſers nor his accuſations; he is puniſhed before he is proved guilty; he is forced to accuſe himſelf; and to extricate himſelf from the extreme miſery which he ſuffers from this force, he frequently confeſſes crimes which he never committed; and from this extorted confeſſion is delivered over to other tormentors to be burnt to death.

The eccleſiaſtical ſtate was the center of perſecution, there the Pope, armed with all the terrors of the Inquiſition, ſuffered no apoſtate to touch that holy ground with impunity; and when Luther, or any other ſuſpected Heretick was ſummoned to Rome, to anſwer the charge laid againſt him, he ſaw "*veſtigia nulla retrorſum*," and too well knew in what manner his cauſe would be cleared up by that court, to venture himſelf within the precincts of it. This Paul IV. who in his condemnation of Cranmer, is ſaid to proceed no farther than to his ſpiritual ſtate, was, from our author's

thor's own account, one of the moſt cruel tyrants that ever ſat upon the Pontifical Throne; when he was Cardinal, he was placed at the head of the Inquiſition, where he exerciſed ſeverities with inextinguiſhable fury; and when he was made Pope, the priſons were continually crouded with miſerable wretches of all ſorts, and the barbarity which his mind had been long inured to, did not leave him when he was leaving the world; for he ſpent his laſt moments in a recommendatory panegyrick upon the inquiſition: the juriſdiction of his church was indeed ſufficiently exemplified by the decree of this Pope againſt Cranmer, which commanded Philip and Mary to deal with him as the law directs, for he knew full well what that was, and alſo that they would not, and dared not diſobey his mandate. The Pope ſeldom failed to inflict all kinds of corporal puniſhments which were in his power; and where they were out of it, he made what uſe he could of the Civil Magiſtrate for that purpoſe, whoſe orders or inſtructions were generally unlimited for the extirpation of hereſy; and an abſolute obedience to the Pope was the principal and neceſſary qualification of his miniſters: This appears from

from the reſolutions of Sadolet, Biſhop of Carpentras, whom Mr. Phillips produces as an extraordinary inſtance of moderation; and moderate indeed he was, when conſidered as a Papiſt, but of a narrow and uncharitable ſpirit, when conſidered as a Chriſtian; for when the Pope had ſent him a commiſſion to ſeek after and puniſh the Lutherans, he thought himſelf greatly honoured by this ſingular mark of his Holineſs's favour, and was determined to put it into execution: only he propoſed to try firſt what a mild aſpect, with perſuaſion, would do, but where theſe failed, he would then put on a countenance armed with terror, and proceed to the application of racks and gibbets, p. 301.

Though Mr. Phillips ſays, that the eccleſiaſtical proceedings were extended no farther than to the ſpiritual ſtate of the offender, yet if it be conſidered what he underwent, even in countries where there was no inquiſition, and before he was delivered over to the civil Magiſtrate, he will be found to be not a little affected in his temporal circumſtances; for upon ſlight information, he was apprehended, loaded with irons and caſt into a diſmal dungeon, when he could ſue out no writ of Ha-

beas

beas Corpus to be admitted to bail, or to haſten his trial; but he was kept in durance at the will of the Biſhop, or eccleſiaſtical judge; and half of ſuch priſoners languiſhed and died from the noiſome ſtenches of their cells, and their long and cloſe confinement in them; and when the other half were tried and found guilty, the eccleſiaſtical ſentence extended to the confiſcation of all their real and perſonal eſtates, which was always put in execution before the ſpiritual rulers parted with the criminal out of their hands.

Mr. Phillips cloſes his arguments for the clemency of his Church with the ſpeech which the biſhop, or officer, who delivers the delinquent over to the civil Magiſtrate, concludes the proceedings of his court, viz. we beſeech you with all earneſtneſs, that for the love of Almighty God, and on the motive of compaſſion, and becauſe we aſk it of you, that you will not condemn this miſerable perſon to death, or the loſs of his limbs, B. ii. p. 167. What a ſolemn farce is this! and what an ample proof of the diſſimulation and perfidy of the Church of Rome? which, after it had inflicted upon their convict all the ſeverities which lay in their power, and given him to the

the temporal officer, on purpoſe that the rigour of that fiery ſtatute, "*De Heretico comburendo*," which they were the authors of, ſhould be executed upon him, they inſult over him with a feigned petition for compaſſion: thus their tender mercies are cruel; and woe be to thoſe proteſtants who fall into their hands, and have no other dependence for their deliverance, but theſe inſidious prayers of their eccleſiaſtical judges, who weep for their priſoner with the tears of the crocodile, the emblem of ſuperſtition; who is ſaid to cry over his prey before he devours it.

LETTER XXI.

HAVING treated at large of the prejudices and violences of the Papiſts againſt the Proteſtants, I will now proceed to conſider their Credulity and Superſtition, and more particularly of our Author, with reſpect to the doctrines of their own Church.

Speaking of the Myſteries of Religion, he ſaith, "Though they are propoſed to our underſtanding with all the evidence of light and truth, they muſt always be the object of faith rather than knowledge, as being little conſo-

nant to reaſon, and to the experience of our ſenſes." And again, in the ſame page: "The ſacred obſcurity in which the Euchariſt is veiled, was particularly marked out *(that is by the ſectaries)* as an impoſition on human reaſon, and the doctrines concerning it were brought down to the teſt of our ſenſes." B. i. p. 331.

If the Myſteries of Religion be propoſed to my underſtanding, and yet are not conſonant to my reaſon, or to the experience of my ſenſes, they cannot poſſibly be the object of my faith; for how can I believe that to be, which is contrary to my underſtanding, and which my reaſon aſſures me cannot be? Faith is a rational conviction, and that belief which is not founded upon reaſon is not faith, but a thoughtleſs credulity, or a feigned aſſent: but this whole ſubject of Faith and Credulity may be ſet in the cleareſt light, by a compariſon of Natural with Religious Myſteries. Let it be ſuppoſed then, that Kepler, or Sir Iſaac Newton, or any celebrated Aſtronomer, ſhould declare that all the primary planets move in eliptical orbits, having one common focus where the Sun is placed, and that the law of their tendency to it is reciprocally as the ſquares of their diſtances from it. I perfectly underſtand

underſtand what an eliptical orbit, its focus, and this centripetal law are: but not being an adept in Aſtronomical Studies, I am no competent judge how far theſe things are applicable to the ſun and planets. Theſe Declarations, therefore, are myſteries to me; but though they are above my underſtanding they are not contrary to it. I ſee no abſurdity in them, and they may for ought I know be true. The Sun indeed appears to move, and ſo do the ſhores, and all things upon them, when I am ſailing in a ſhip at ſea. If then this earth on which I ſtand be itſelf a moving object, the ſun, ſtars, and all detached objects, will, I am ſenſible, from the nature of viſion, ſeem to recede from, or approach to me, juſt in the ſame manner as if they had been moving, and I had been placed upon a fixed object. This objection therefore vaniſhes, and this earth may, for ought that appears, be moving in its orbit; and upon conſidering how much more commodious it is for it to turn round its own axis in twenty four hours, than for the immenſe body of the ſun to run ſuch prodigious lengths in ſo ſmall a time, it ſeems to me moſt probable that it doth ſo; and if it hath a diurnal, why not an annual motion?

Hence the more I enquire into theſe Aſtronomical Paradoxes, or Myſteries, the leſs difficulties they ſeem to labour with.

This then being the ſtate of theſe things, with reſpect to my underſtanding, my faith from theſe principles alone is in ſuſpenſe: but when I conſider what character theſe Aſtronomers have for their ſkill in this ſcience, how univerſally their declarations are received, and eſpecially by all thoſe who I have the greateſt reaſon to think are judges of their demonſtrations; how exactly they predict Lunar and Solar Eclipſes, with the return of Comets, and how well they account for all other phenomena of the heavenly bodies; then theſe teſtimonies turn the balance, and incline me to believe them. Thus theſe natural myſteries which are propoſed to my underſtanding, appear conſonant to it, and to the experience of my ſenſes, whence my faith is founded upon a rational conviction, and I ſhould offend againſt the greater light if I with-held my aſſent from them.

But ſhould any Mathematician aſſert, that the three angles of a triangle are more or leſs than two right angles, from the little knowledge I have in Geometry, this would be no myſtery

myſtery to me, nor any object of my faith, becauſe it is diſſonant to, and an impoſition upon my reaſon; for I have as clear an idea of its falſity as I can have of the plaineſt truths.

Again, whoever dogmatically affirms, that ſugar is bitter, ſnow black, or brandy a ſolid ſubſtance, propoſes things contrary to the experience of my ſenſes, which are the proper and ſole judges of them. Theſe therefore are no myſteries: they are impudent inſults upon my ſenſes; my taſte, my ſight, my touch tell me they are falſe; and it might with as much propriety be ſaid, that I have neither reaſon nor ſenſes, as to contradict theſe manifeſt reports of them.

From theſe natural myſteries let us now turn to religious myſteries: The reſurrection of the body, a future judgment, the rewards of the righteous, and the puniſhments of the wicked in another life, are doctrines of revelation; they are propoſed to my underſtanding, and I know what they mean; but how, or where, or when they will be, are above my comprehenſion; the particular circumſtances of all theſe things are myſteries to me; they are not diſſonant, nor contrary to my reaſon, which by itſelf is almoſt in the dark, and neutral

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upon theſe points; but there is no apparent impoſſibility to deſtroy, nor improbability to detract from the teſtimonies of the revealer. My faith therefore reſts upon the external and internal proofs of his divine miſſion, and if theſe are ſatisfactory and perfect, my conviction is juſt, and my faith is rational.

But when it is confidently aſſerted, that the ſame corporeal ſubſtance, is in two or many different places at the ſame time, or that the ſame Elements are this minute Bread and Wine, and the next are hocus-pocus'd into Fleſh and Blood, without the leaſt ſenſible change of the elements themſelves. That is ſuch a flat contradiction to my reaſon, and this ſuch a groſs impoſition upon my ſenſes, that I know they cannot be true: here are no obſcurities, no myſteries; I have as clear an idea, and am as fully aſſured that the ſame body cannot be in different places at the ſame time, as that two and two do not make five; and the Church of Rome may as well inſiſt upon my believing that the ſun doth not ſhine at mid day, and that this obſcurity ought not to be brought down to the teſt of my ſight, as that which is proved to be Bread and Wine, by the experience of all my ſenſes, is the Body

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and Blood of a perſon who was killed ſeventeen hundred years ago.

Theſe I take to be the true diſtinctions between what is above, and what is diſſonant to my reaſon; and between what is a myſtery and a contradiction; or what is an object of Faith, of Credulity, and of feigned aſſent: and as theſe are too clear to need any farther explication, I will haſten to other points of our Author's credulity, which are the Miracles his Church pretends to perform. I will not take upon me to determine, neither will I enter into the diſpute, when the powers of working miracles ceaſed in the Chriſtian Church; all that I ſhall attempt to ſhew is, that we have no ſatisfactory proofs of any ſupernatural works done either ſince, or at the time, or for ſome centuries before the Reformation.

America, ſays Mr. Phillips, was enlightened by the labours and miracles of St. Lewis Bertrand: and St. Francis Xavier ſhewed the ſpirit and wonders of an Apoſtle in the Eaſt-Indies, B. i. p. 429. And again, there was at Canterbury a celebrated monaſtery of St. Auſtin, by whoſe Preaching, Labours and Miracles, our Saxon Anceſtors had received the benefit of Chriſtianity, and by a quotation from

Boſſuet

Boſſuet, he ſays, that it hath pleaſed the wiſdom of the Almighty to declare in the favour of the cauſe of St. Thomas Becket, by wonders which were ſo frequent and ſo well atteſted by the unanimous agreement of all authors of thoſe times, that they cannot be conteſted, without calling in queſtion whatever hiſtory hath tranſmitted to us, B. i. p. 225, 227.

I cannot find in any authentick memoirs of Auſtin, or his fellow Miſſionaries, that any particular miracles were wrought by them in their converſion of the Anglo-Saxons: I am likewiſe a ſtranger to the records in the Romiſh Legends of the wonders which Bertrand or Xavier did in their travels through the eaſtern and weſtern regions of the world: but moſt of the miracles, which were attributed to the reliques of Thomas Becket were of the ſame kind with the recovery of the Dauphin's health, when his father, Lewis VII. of France, offered up his ſupplications for him at Becket's tomb; the phyſicians who had been conſulted in this caſe, and applied their medicines, had doubtleſs ſome pretentions to this cure; and after all it was very uncertain whether nature or ſtrength of conſtitution did not contribute more

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to it than either the phyſick of the one, or the prayers of the other.

LETTER XXII.

BUT ſince the Romiſh Church ſtill claims this power of working miracles, they have the preſent manifeſtation of it to offer for a confirmation of the above-mentioned facts, and the conviction of Proteſtants; who object that all theſe miracles were done before the moſt ignorant and credulous people, who might be eaſily impoſed upon by falſe and deſigning Miſſionaries: unbelievers likewiſe are very apt to ſay that if Thomas Becket could protect them who venerated his remains, and avert injuries from them, why could he not defend the remains themſelves from ravagers, and chaſtize them for their inſolence? or why ſhould not the ſame virtue continue after their removal in the place where they had been for a long time depoſited? or why ſhould ſuch power be given into the hands of ſacrilegious wretches as to break theſe charms with impunity, and put a total ſtop to all theſe miracles, only by burning a few bones and ſcattering their aſhes in the wind? Theſe are fair queſtions and deſerve

a ſerious anſwer, and as truth will bear the ſtricteſt examination, and rejoices in the light, why do not the Romaniſts refute the gainſayings of their adverſaries by a full diſplay of their miracles; if therefore they will now heal diſeaſes, make the blind to ſee, the deaf to hear, the dumb to ſpeak, and raiſe the dead to life in as publick a manner as our Saviour and his Apoſtles did, they will find no perverſeneſs nor hardneſs of heart among the Proteſtants, the greater part of whom are competent judges of ſupernatural gifts, are capable of diſtinguiſhing true from falſe miracles, and where they find them, are moſt open to conviction, ſo that the moſt expeditious and ſureſt way of reconciling them to their Church would be by theſe manifeſt demonſtrations of their power: but if they refuſe to exhibit publickly ſuch neceſſary proofs of it before them, and only perform their wonders in dark or diſtant places, or before ſuch perſons as dare not or will not diſpute them, then the Proteſtant will be ſtrengthened in his defection from the Romiſh Religion, and his ſuſpicions of a fraud in the pretended miracles of their preſent or former Saints.

Again, the members of the Church of Rome are not more aſſuming of theſe ſupernatural powers

powers than they are ſuperſtitious in their conſtructions of divine judgments. Though the righteous in this promiſcuous ſtate are frequently involved in the ſame calamities with the wicked, and though in moſt caſes it is impoſſible to know whether the diſpenſations of the Almighty are in judgment or in mercy, yet men of all perſuaſions, but moſt remarkably of the Romiſh Communion, are ſo preſuming upon the goodneſs of their cauſe, as to engroſs providence to themſelves: they are ſtrangely apt to ſuppoſe, that all the proceedings of the moſt High are directed to their ſervice, and conſequently interpret them either as ſpecial favours to them, or as ſignal judgments upon their oppoſers. There are numerous inſtances of this kind in Mr. Phillips's Hiſtory; ſome of which it will not be improper to lay before the reader, as ſpecimens of his bigotry and ſuperſtition.

He begins with Cardinal Wolſey, who had the Pope's decree for the ſuppreſſion of ſome religious houſes, for the founding of two colleges; yet he, and all that were concerned in it, our author ſays, were obſerved to be remarkably unfortunate, the Pope himſelf not excepted; and as to the two foundations in

favour of which the monaſteries were ſuppreſſed, the college at Ipſwich became a ruin almoſt before it was built, and the other at Oxford was never finiſhed, B. i. p. 27.

Speaking of Ann Bullen's death, he ſaith, her fate was conſidered not merely as a puniſhment, but as a divine judgment. P. 124. Mr. Phillips and many of the Papiſts might conſider it as ſuch, but there was nothing in it to diſtinguiſh it for a divine judgment, more than was in the firſt Catharine's divorce, or the other Catharine's ſimilar fate, or the execution of Fiſher and More.

Again, " The complicated and national guilt which was incurred by diſſolving them, that is, the Religious Houſes, hath induced ſome to look on theſe calamities which trod on the heels of this iniquity, as ſo many indications of a provoked and avenging God: of a hundred families of note and fortune which were in the county of Norfolk before the diſſolution all that had enriched themſelves by theſe ſpoils of ſacrilege, were either extinct or much impaired in Sir Henry Spelman's time." P. 224.

As the monaſteries were poſſeſſed of more than half the lands of the kingdom, we may ſuppoſe

ſuppoſe that half of the families of diſtinction were enriched by them. How can our author then be ſo prejudiced againſt Norfolk as to confine his judgments to that county? Why doth he ſingle that out and ſacrifice it to the divine diſpleaſure, when the reſt of the nation were equally guilty in making thoſe purchaſes, ſome of which have continued in the ſame families to this day; and I don't find that they bear a leſs value, or ſell for a leſs price than any other eſtates in the kingdom, notwithſtanding the curſes which our author or his Church hath entailed upon them, or the judgments which he aſſerts trod upon the heels of, or followed at any diſtance from, this alienation. But the anger of heaven it ſeems, exerciſed on the nobility a ſtill ſeverer vengeance than in permitting their poſſeſſions to moulder away, and their families to fall; more of that claſs having been attainted and died by the hands of the executioner within twenty years after the diſſolution, than during the preceding five hundred. P. 224.

The ſuppreſſion of the leſſer Monaſteries was in the year 1536, and of the greater in 1539; ſince which times Cromwell was the only Peer of the Reformed who was executed

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in that reign, the others of that claſs who ſuffered were rank Papiſts, and principal oppugners of this diſſolution; ſo that our Author here gives a fair opportunity of retaliating judgments upon them for this oppoſition. The Duke of Somerſet and his brother, were the only two of the Nobility who were put to death in Edward the Sixth's Reign. Lady Jane Gray with ſome of her relations were beheaded in the beginning of Queen Mary's Reign; and afterwards there were four Biſhops burnt for what the furious zealots of the Church of Rome called Hereſy, whom I ſuppoſe Mr. Phillips reckons as inſtruments in the hands of the Almighty for inflicting his Judgments upon theſe apoſtates. The confining the Divine Judgments to Bills of Attainder, is ſo weak and ſuperſtitious a ſuggeſtion, that it would be ridiculous to enter into any particular diſcuſſion of it, therefore I ſhall only make this general remark, that he was obliged to limit his judgments to executions upon the ſcaffold; for there were twice as many of the Nobility who fell by the ſword, and came to untimely ends in the Reigns of Henry VI. and Edward IV. and during the ſhort Regency and Reign of Richard III. than there were in a

century after the diſſolution of the monaſteries. But this diſſolution, it ſeems, was ſuch an unparalleled and unpardonable a crime, that the very day which gave commencement to it, as our author obſerves, was thought a hundred years after to be ominous; for on the meeting of the long Parliament, from which the Church of England dates her misfortunes, ſeveral perſons, almoſt as ſuperſtitious as Mr. Phillips, entreated Archbiſhop Laud to move the King to have it adjourned for a ſhort time; it being the ſame day on which the Legiſlature in Henry the Eighth's Reign began the diſſolution of Religious Houſes, which was the 3d of November, 1640; from which our author ſeems to imply, that ſuch an adjournment might have prevented all the ſubſequent evils. P. 224. The 5th day of the ſame month hath likewiſe proved as ominous to the Roman Catholicks, as the 3d was to the Monaſteries; ſo that theſe two days ſhould be expunged for ever out of their calendar, and nothing ſhould be done upon them.

Another remarkable inſtance of our author's bigotry and ſuperſtition is, his obſervation upon the building of Somerſet Houſe, on the ruins of the deanry and cloſe of Weſtminſter, of the

pariſh Church of the Bleſſed Virgin Mary, and of three epiſcopal houſes, with ſome others: this pile of ſacrilege, he ſays, was reared in the very year that England was afflicted with a peſtilence, that ſwept away thouſands. B. i. p. 444; and he might with as much reaſon have added, that in leſs than the ſpace of one hundred and twenty years after this ſacrilegious building, London was viſited with a plague, which carried off ſome ten thouſands, and the whole city was almoſt conſumed by fire. But theſe applications of divine judgments are ſo manifeſtly abſurd, that the bare mentioning of them will be a ſufficient refutation. I ſhall therefore conclude this head with a brief recital of two or three ſuperſtitious anecdotes of our author, viz. B. ii. p. 1. Nature put an end to the life of Edward the Sixth, the 6th of July 1553, which was obſerved to be the ſame day of the ſame month that his father had put Sir Thomas More to death.

Again, an incident happened, which was remarked by every one there preſent, and interpreted as a declaration of heaven in his favour, and which, in whatever light it may now be looked on by the reader, I muſt not omit; the wind, which for ſeveral days had been

been ſo contrary as to make the paſſage to England impracticable, and ſeemed as if it would continue ſo, on the very night of the Legate's arrival, became on a ſudden fair, and in a few hours conveyed him and his retinue to Dover. B. ii. p. 77.

And laſtly, the third day after his arrival, Cardinal Pole went to Court, where the King delivered into his hands a packet of letters he had juſt then received. It was a diſpatch from Rome, and brought the Legate the moſt ample powers, in order to accompliſh the great work of the nation's reconciliation with the Catholick Church: and the incident of its arriving at that critical juncture *(being doubtleſs as ſtupendous a miracle as the wind turning at Calais)* was interpreted as a declaration of heaven in favour of a cauſe, which then engaged the attention of all Europe. B. ii. p. 80.

To which it might be added with as much propriety, and more probability of truth, That the Death of Queen Mary and Cardinal Pole, happening ſoon after, and almoſt in the ſame hour, and before this reconciliation could be thoroughly finiſhed, might be interpreted as a declaration of Heaven in diſfavour of a Cauſe, which Providence would bring to nought;

which extraordinary events, together with the ſucceſſion of Elizabeth to the Crown, and the eſtabliſhment of the Proteſtant Religion in theſe Kingdoms, againſt which the Gates of Rome have never ſince prevailed, did then and do to this day, engage the attention of all Chriſtendom.

LETTER XXIII.

FROM this deſcription of our Author, we are naturally led to make ſome remarks on his Characters of the Perſons introduced into his Hiſtory, which are given in ſo partial a manner to all who are of his Communion and ſo prejudiced to all who differ from it, that it is very evident a Papiſtical Orthodoxy is the ſtandard which he meaſures them by; for the more the Romaniſt hath merited of his Church, the nearer he approaches to the ſummit of perfection, and the more the Reformer hath acted againſt it, the deeper he is ſunk in vileneſs: The Lady Jane Grey is the only Proteſtant to be met with in his Hiſtory whom he ſpares, and that is upon account of her youth, though he is afraid ſhe had hurt herſelf by her application

application to the ſtudy of the ſcriptures, which though undertaken, he ſays, by the ſex on the ſpecious principle of ſeeking the truth, yet too often betrays them into errors, or confirms them in thoſe they have already imbibed. B. ii. p. 36. Pope *Paul* IV. is almoſt the only Papiſt he cenſures, and the reaſon for it was his enmity to Pole.

We will begin with examining his Characters of the Roman Catholicks, and then proceed to thoſe of the Reformers.

At the head of the firſt Claſs ſtands Cardinal Pole, whom our Hiſtorians, for his being excluded from the perſecuting councils in Queen Mary's reign, have ſpoken of him much more favourably than he really deſerved, and his failings would have been buried in oblivion had not Phillips officiouſly brought them out to publick View; for thinking to take the advantage of this indulgence, he hath attempted to raiſe Pole's Character upon the ruins of the Reformation, and for his oppoſition to the meaſures for advancing it he hath produced him as the moſt diſintereſted patriot, the moſt illuſtrious hero, and the moſt accompliſhed churchman, that exiſted in his or any other age.

As therefore this Biographer hath made Pole his inſtrument for throwing a load of infamy upon the Reformation, it is become neceſſary in its vindication, to ſupply the defects of our hiſtorians, and to ſet Pole's character in its juſt and true light.

Burnet and Godwin have ſaid but little more in the general character of him, than that he was a Prelate of a ſweet and amiable temper, who would have been glad to have brought back the Engliſh Nation by fair and lawful means to their antient Belief, but approved not of the method of fire and ſword: As a ſupplement to this partial deſcription, it muſt be added, that he was a perſon of a weak underſtanding, extremely ſuperſtitious, a violent Bigot to the Supremacy and Power of the See of Rome, of an ambitious ſpirit, guilty of the foulеſt ingratitude to his Royal Benefactor, and a Rebel and Traitor to his King and Country.

All which articles will be clearly proved from a brief detail of his Life, extracted from the moſt authentick records, and from Phillips's and Pole's own writings.

Reginald Pole was ſecond Couſin to Henry VIII. and lineally deſcended by his Mother from the

the Houſe of York: the King took him very ſoon under his patronage, and made him before he was 15 years old, Prebendary of Sarum, and Dean of Winbourne-Minſter in Dorſetſhire and of Exeter; in his 17th year Pole went to the Univerſity of Padua, where the King allowed him a large annual penſion ſuitable to his rank, or 500l. which is equal to 5000 l. at preſent. His mother, the Counteſs of Saliſbury was an intimate friend and confident of Queen Catharine, and was alſo entruſted with the education of her daughter the Princeſs Mary; who being bred up in the ſame family with Reginald, became very early acquainted with him, and their acquaintance ſoon grew into a mutual affection, which on his ſide was quickened by ambition; for the Princeſs was then heir apparent to the Crown, and her Mother not likely to have any more children; it is very natural therefore to ſuppoſe that Pole flattered himſelf with the proſpect of being one day huſband to a Queen of England, and perhaps a partner with her on the Throne: His whole future conduct confirms this ſuppoſition, and without it, it is impoſſible to account for his behaviour to his Royal Patron.

When

When the affair of the King's Divorce from Catharine of Arragon was in Agitation, it is no wonder that Reginald in his heart was violently ſet againſt it, for it tended to baſtardize her Daughter, and opened a way to a ſecond marriage, which might produce a male heir to the Crown, who though younger would take place of a female: but the fear of incurring the King's diſpleaſure kept Pole upon the reſerve in this point, till Henry wanting him to take his part, offered him the Archbiſhoprick of York, which was then void by Wolſey's death, upon condition that he would publickly declare for the divorce; Pole deferred his anſwer as long as he could, but being at length obliged to give it, he refuſed the offer on thoſe terms, and though he did it in the moſt ſubmiſſive manner, yet the King was highly provoked againſt him, and conferred the Archbiſhoprick upon another; however he was ſoon after appeaſed, and continued his penſion to him.

The Pope's oppoſition to the Divorce ſet the King upon claiming the Supremacy in the Church of England; Pole not approving of Henry's deſign, but yet being afraid to appear openly againſt it, deſired leave to go abroad,

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which the King aſſented to; he was now about thirty three years old when he left England, and retired to Avignon, a City of Provence, where he ſtaid about a twelve-month, and then went to Padua; at this place after ſome time he received the King's orders, by which he was commanded to ſend him his opinion, in writing, concerning the Supremacy. Pole had kept his ſentiments upon it ſo cloſe, that the King preſumed upon a declaration in his favour, ſeveral of Reginald's acquaintance alſo had the ſame expectation, and indeed it appears from his own account of himſelf that he was for ſome time in ſuſpenſe which ſide he ſhould take; but the executions of Fiſher and Moore, his intimate friends, exaſperated him againſt the King; the preſſing ſollicitations likewiſe of the Court of Rome, which he well knew had great influence on the principal powers of Europe, and the diſaffection of the people in England, awakened his ambition, and not only turned the ſcale in favour of the Pope, but prevailed with him to write a treatiſe, *De Unitate Eccleſiæ*, in which he firſt attempts to diſprove the Regal, and eſtabliſh the Papal Supremacy, in the Church of England; and then proceeds to abuſe the King

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in the moſt ſcurrilous manner, upbraiding him with the murder of Fiſher and Moore, and for the injuries he had done to his Queen and her Daughter; making him worſe than Nero or Domitian for his cruelties, he calls him one of the Giants that waged war againſt Heaven, a double-headed Cerberus, Head of the Devil's Church, and the Devil himſelf; and pours forth a Torrent of ſuch infamous abuſe as was never exceeded even in Billingſgate. If Pole had delivered his opinion modeſtly and diſpaſſionately, he might have pleaded Conviction and Conſcience, but nothing could juſtify theſe virulent invectives; his faſteſt friends condemned him for it, and it was very evident to all the world, that they were not the language of pure ſincerity, but the foam of rage, malice, and diſappointed ambition. The arguments likewiſe which convinced him of the Papal Supremacy, ſhew the weakneſs of his head, as much as theſe ſlanders do the depravity of his heart.

I was confirmed, ſays he, in theſe ſentiments, not ſo much by the many and cogent reaſons which I had gathered from the writings of others, or from what my own thoughts had ſuggeſted in the long and repeated reflections

I had

I had made on the affair, as by that ſingle argument, with which the blood of theſe Champions, ſhed in this cauſe, furniſhed me; that the divine veracity hath always manifeſted itſelf by ſuch evidence, we are aſſured firſt by his death, who was truth itſelf, and afterwards by thoſe legions of witneſſes, who have atteſted the ſame Doctrine in all parts, and through all ages of the world; I beheld, therefore, the hand-writing of God in theſe Sufferings, whoſe paſt life was a ſufficient proof of the favour they had found with him, and I could not but reverence the ſign and ſubſcribe to it, B. i. p. 115.

The Suffering of Death is indeed a convincing proof of the perſon's belief of the Doctrines, for which he ſuffers, but it is no infallible proof of the truth of the Doctrines themſelves; for there is hardly any religious tenet, however abſurd it be, but what may boaſt of its Martyrs. It was the humour of the times, which Pole gave into, to take the teſtimony of an opinion ſealed with blood for an inconteſtable demonſtration of its truth; though this kind of proof had been lately refuted and expoſed by a very remark-

able fact, related by the author of the life of Pope Alexander VI. where a Dominican Friar is ſaid to have offered himſelf to the flames, to verify the Doctrines eſpouſed by Savanorola, which was accordingly admitted as an undeniable argument for their truth, till another, as frantic an Enthuſiaſt as the former, made the ſame offer for the eſtabliſhment of the direct contrary opinions: Here then was demonſtration againſt demonſtration, the ſubjects in diſpute were reduced to their former uncertainty, and nothing could be inferred, but the madneſs of theſe Monks, and the weakneſs of their proofs; but weak as they were, they were ſufficient to convince Pole of the Pope's Supremacy.

LETTER XXIV.

THE King was greatly ſurpriſed and enraged at theſe ungrateful returns of his Kinſman and Dependant, who had received not only no Provocation from him, but was under the higheſt obligations to him: Pole therefore had forfeited all title to the Royal Bounty, and the King who had been the beſt of friends, finding himſelf treated as the worſt of enemies, had abundant reaſon to withdraw his penſion, which had hitherto been conſtantly returned to him, and put an end to all favours: This indeed was no more than what Pole from the conſciouſneſs of his deſerts expected, and had been providing againſt by making his addreſſes to the Court of Rome, where he had ſent his Book, *De Unitate Eccleſiæ*, for the Pope and his Friends' peruſal, and had received their approbation with aſſurances of protection and ſupport: for Pole being nearly related to the Royal Family in England, and having great friends and intereſt there, he was conſidered as a proper perſon to be employed in the recovery of this fair portion, and the reſtoration of a revolted people

to their obedience to the See of Rome: the Pope with his College of Cardinals therefore was determined to get him over to his ſide, and ſoon after he had drawn him into this breach with the King, he commanded him to repair to Rome; Henry being informed of it, and apprehenſive what uſe was deſigned to be made of him there, endeavoured to prevent his journey, by threatening meſſages ſent by Cromwell, and alſo by gentle perſuaſions from his relations; but neither the loud menaces of the Engliſh Miniſtry, nor the ſofter entreaties of his Mother the Counteſs of Saliſbury, and of his Brother the Lord Montague, could prevail with him to deſiſt from taking a ſtep ſo diſpleaſing to the King, and perilous to them.

Having thus broke through all the ties of gratitude, loyalty, and affection, to his King and Country, Pole had no reſtraints to hinder him from running the greateſt lengths in his oppoſition to them: he had not been long at Rome before the Pope offered him a Cardinal's Hat, this promotion not ſuiting with his favourite ſcheme, he at firſt declined it, but the Pope inſiſting upon it, he was obliged to accept it. The King about this time ſuppreſſed the leſſer Monaſteries in England, which cauſing great

great diſturbances among the Papiſts, there were ſeveral inſurrections; and our Author affirms that no leſs than 20,000 male-contents took up arms in Lincolnſhire, and 40,000 in the Northern Counties, who got poſſeſſion of York and Hull; and were joined by the Archbiſhop of York, Dr. Lee, and Lord Darcy: the firſt of theſe formidable bodies diſperſed themſelves of their own accord; the other retired to their own homes without coming to an engagement, upon the approach of the Duke of Norfolk, with a far leſs number. However theſe inſurrections, which fame had not leſſened at Rome, ſeemed there to indicate a revolution in favour of the Papal Supremacy; the Conclave therefore was reſolved to ſupport them as much as lay in their power, and embrace this ſeaſonable opportunity of turning his own Relation againſt the King, and making him their tool for fomenting ſedition and rebellion in England. For theſe purpoſes Pole was ordered to go into the Low Countries in the quality of a Legate, where, from the nearneſs of his ſituation, he might have early and full intelligence of the ſtrength and progreſs of the Rebels, and when occaſion offered might ſoon croſs the Britiſh Channel and

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join them. And here I cannot but obſerve that Mr. Phillips never calls them Rebels, but diſtinguiſhes them by the milder appellation of Inſurgents, becauſe he conſiders them I ſuppoſe as the body of the People engaged in a juſt cauſe, and the King as an Uſurper and his Party the Rebels: the Pope had no money nor men to ſupport his cauſe, but he fitted out Pole with all the means he had in his power, he gave him an ample and diſcretionary commiſſion to do every thing which might diſtreſs Henry, and be of emolument to the See of Rome; he armed him likewiſe with Credentials to the ſeveral Powers of Europe: his firſt letter our Author ſays was addreſſed to the Engliſh nation, and declared the ſatisfaction his Holineſs had received from the late proof they had given, that their revolt from a faith and obedience, by which they had till then diſtinguiſhed themſelves, had been conſtrained and forced, he required them to pay due deference to the Legate, and aſſiſt him in the execution of his orders, which had been dictated by Piety, and were directed to the glory of GOD, and their welfare.

His ſecond letter was to the King of Scotland, James V. who was exhorted and entreated

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to ſupport the Legate by favouring the diſpoſitions the Engliſh had ſhewed to return to the Faith of their anceſtors, as their neighbourhood gave him a facility to aſſiſt them; and at the ſame time the Pope ſent him a ſword and a cap of maintenance, with another letter explaining the typical repreſentation of each preſent.

The other Letters were to the moſt Chriſtian King, and to Mary Dowager Queen of Hungary, Siſter to Charles V. and Governeſs of the Low Countries, and were of the like import. p. 175. Beſides theſe Credentials, it is upon good grounds ſuppoſed, that Pole had in his pocket the Pope's Excommunication and Depoſition of Henry; which was drawn up about this time, and to be publiſhed upon the firſt fair opportunity: for theſe and other reaſons Pole is charged, by ſeveral of our Hiſtorians, with having a deſign upon the Crown of England; and though his Biographer takes much pains to clear him of it, yet he ſeems to me, even in his laboured apology, to make ſuch conceſſions, and allow ſuch teſtimonies, as indiſputably confirm it; and if Pole's principles may be judged of from his conduct, he muſt have had ſome ſuch ambitious views, for he could

could not have done more as times and circumſtances then were, had he any ſuch intentions, and he would certainly have done much leſs, if he had none: he appeared to offer himſelf for this commiſſion when he tells the Pope, that ſome proper perſon ſhould be appointed to keep up the reſolutions of the Inſurgents in England, and a ſufficient fund allowed for that purpoſe: and his apologiſt acknowledges that Pole had entered into a *kind of offenſive* ſtate with his Sovereign by his journey into the Low Countries, for he went there with *an hoſtile intention*; his ſole buſineſs was to ſupport the Rebels, and upon any proſpect of their ſucceſs, to join them: it is eaſy therefore to gueſs what would have been the conſequence if the King's forces had been defeated, and it is as eaſy to gueſs what Pole imagined the conſequence would be from the reaſons he alledges for his motives in his letters and other works, where this part of his conduct is the ſubject. For he repreſents the original contract between the King and People as no longer ſubſiſting, having been violated by the former in many concerns of the higheſt and moſt weighty importance, that the King had broken their Grand Charter, had made

made the acknowledgment of the Pope's ſupremacy high treaſon; had ſubſtituted a ſtrange Head in its room, and puniſhed thoſe who refuſed to ſubmit to it as traitors and felons; that he had made examples of Fiſher and Moore, and outlawed him, the Pope's Legate; had ejected thouſands out of their poſſeſſions, and delivered them over to vagrancy and want, and that the Parliament had joined with him in theſe outrages, and were become the joint oppreſſors of the People; and laſtly, the Nation had declared their ſenſe of its wrongs, by the inſurrections they had made to redreſs them.

Now for what other purpoſe doth Pole produce all theſe arguments, and make the voice of a licentious rabble the ſenſe of the nation, but to vindicate his own conduct, and prove the lawfulneſs of his and their attempts to pull down Henry, and place him the Legate upon the throne? The Engliſh Miniſtry had early intelligence of Pole's commiſſion, they were informed of his inſtructions, and the ſteps he was to take for executing them; they ſuſpected likewiſe what his real intentions were, and took effectual meaſures to prevent them, the King of France was prevailed upon through their inſtigation, to ſignify to the Legate, upon

the day of his arrival at Paris in his way to the Netherlands, that he would not treat with him upon the buſineſs he was charged with, and ordered him to quit his dominions without delay; upon the receipt of this meſſage Pole immediately ſet out for Cambray, where he ſent to the Governeſs of the Low Countries for leave to paſs through them to Liege, but Henry was there alſo before-hand with him, and had engaged her not to ſuffer Pole to proſecute his journey through her territories. The Pope hearing of theſe obſtacles, and alſo of the diſperſion of the Inſurgents in England, ſent to his Legate to return to Rome, but he not knowing the miſerable ſituation of his affairs in England ſo well as the Pope, or not willing to give up the fair proſpect his ambition had ſet before him, in ſo abrupt a manner, interceded to continue a little longer in the place he then was; alledging for his reaſons, that the cauſe which he had undertaken ſeemed at firſt to promiſe ſucceſs, from the great number of perſons who had taken up arms in England, and the quality of their commanders; and though it was now beginning to grow deſperate, yet in his opinion, it was not to be entirely abandoned, till it farther appeared that nothing

nothing more could be effected, for his precipitate departure would diſpirit their friends, and all would be inevitably loſt; while on the contrary, the zeal of their well-wiſhers would be kept alive, if they had one of their own nation in their ſight, a Chief whoſe reputation had been unblemiſhed, and whoſe example and authority might have influence on them, and who was ſuch a one as no dangers could intimidate when the good of his country was at ſtake. The Pope through theſe ſuggeſtions permitted Pole to ſtay as long as he thought proper, and he continued at Liege about three months longer, when every glimmering hope vaniſhing, and his dangers daily increaſing upon him, he was obliged to yield to the neceſſity of the times, and returned in the utmoſt deſpair to the place from whence he came: From hence it is very evident that Pole did not deny his oppoſition to the King, but laboured to juſtify himſelf in it. The tumults in England being quite ſuppreſſed, the King and Parliament proceeded againſt Pole, they had him attainted of High Treaſon, confiſcated all his goods, ſet a reward of fifty thouſand crowns on his head, and made it Treaſon for any Subject of Britain to hold any correſpondence with

him : Mr. Phillips exclaims moſt vehemently againſt this treatment of his Hero ; preſuming, I ſuppoſe, upon the ſtanding maxim of the Romiſh Church, that whatever was done for the Pope and the Hierarchy was juſt and right, and whatever was done againſt them was iniquitous and wrong : but in the judgment of common ſenſe Henry did no more than what ſelf-defence, and the truſt repoſed in him by his Subjects, required him to do; and what every Sovereign in Europe would have done had they been in his place and circumſtances. Pole as a relation, a dependant, and a natural born ſubject of the King of England, was under the ſtricteſt obligations of affection, gratitude, and loyalty to him ; yet he undertook, by the Pope's Legation, to diſſolve himſelf and all Henry's Subjects from their allegiance to him ; to incenſe his neighbouring powers againſt him, to blow up the flames of civil war in the bowels of his Kingdom, to aſſiſt the malecontents at the hazard of his life, and if occaſion ſerved to head them in depoſing and murdering their King. Having thus proved himſelf a Rebel and a Traitor to his Sovereign and his Country, Henry would have been wanting to himſelf and his people, if he had not treated him

him as ſuch. His Embaſſadors were ordered to inſiſt upon the French King's ſeizing the Cardinal, when he entered into his dominions, and delivering him into their Maſter's hands: and it is amazing to ſee what reflections Pole and his Panegyriſt make upon this demand, and with what aſſurance they both comment upon it, as if no kind of provocation had ever been given to the King of England, and as if Pole was perfectly innocent, and engaged in ſuch a righteous cauſe, that the King of France was in honour and conſcience bound to protect and ſupport him in it, and that neither Henry, nor any of his Subjects, ought to be offended at it, or ſtir in their own defence againſt him: but no reader of common ſenſe can be impoſed upon by ſuch manifeſtly abſurd ſuppoſitions. And if there was any offenſive or defenſive league ſubſiſting at that time between the two Kings, it is ſelf evident, that the ſtrongeſt law of nature, that is, the law of ſelf preſervation, authorized Henry to make this demand upon his ally, and that the law of juſtice and friendſhip obliged Francis to deliver up Pole, as a perſon who had entered into, and was going to execute, a moſt deſperate conſpiracy againſt his King and Country, and had made his ſafety

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and welfare incompatible with the ſafety and welfare of the King of England. But to conclude this letter, though Pole could not attain to the heights he aſpired after, yet as his will was not wanting, and he had ſaid in his heart, *I will exalt myſelf above the King, I will mount his Throne*, he was therefore juſtly entitled to Ambition's motto, *Aſcendam*. Iſaiah, xiv. 13.

LETTER XXV.

IN the beginning of the year 1539, the greater Monaſteries were ſuppreſſed, which was between two and three years after the diſſolution of the leſſer monaſteries; about this time the Pope had an interview with the Emperor, and the King of France, at Nice, where he endeavoured as a mediator to reconcile them to one another: And though he could not bring them to an abſolute peace, yet he prevailed with them to enter into a truce for ten years; at this time it is ſaid they both promiſed the Pope to break off all communication with Henry, and join their forces in reſtoring the Papal Supremacy in England, and aſſiſt a once flouriſhing kingdom, which had now no reſource but from the good offices of her allies.

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The Pope had long ſince deſpaired of recovering, by gentle means or menaces, ſo fair a portion to his Church (or in a homelier but truer phraſe, of filling his coffers with immenſe ſums of money, as his predeceſſors had done, by their exactions and plunder of ſo rich a kingdom) and was determined to proceed to extremities; his excommunication and depoſition of Henry had been drawn up near three years ago, and only waited a favourable conjuncture for their publication, which now ſeemed to offer itſelf, from the union and promiſſes of theſe two Potentates. They were therefore now openly declared, and, as Mr. Phillips ſays, with the formalities, and in the ſtile uſual upon ſuch occaſions; that is, the excommunicated perſon is cut off from the communion of the Faithful, deprived of the participation of the Sacraments, forbid to enter the Church and join in the exerciſe of any act of religious worſhip: and all Chriſtians are likewiſe prohibited all commerce and communion with him, *in any of theſe Articles*. Which laſt words are an addition of Mr. Phillips, in order to ſoften the ſentence: for the Pope's excommunication was always abſolute and unconditional, and forbid all communion or commerce with

with the excommunicated perſon: ſo that an abſolution of the Subjects from their allegiance, and conſequently a depoſition of their Sovereign, was virtually implied in it; for if chriſtians were cut off from all communion or intercourſe with their King, all connections between them muſt be entirely broke; and in ſuch caſes, it is very plain there could be no practical medium between not being with him, and being againſt him; had the ſentence therefore went no farther, it could not be juſtified. Mr. Phillips's additional clauſe likewiſe was highly equivocal and unneceſſary; for this, and indeed all other excommunications from his own account, where Princes were the perſons excommunicated, had for above five hundred years before proceeded to deprive them of their Kingdoms, and abſolve all their Subjects from their duty to them, and require them to take up arms againſt and deſtroy them as the deteſted enemies of GOD and Man. This Biographer, indeed, doth not pretend to vindicate this part of the ſentence, but condemns it as an uſurpation of the Pope's; and I hope he ſpeaks his real ſentiments, but evaſions, diſſimulations, and reſervations, have been ſo much in vogue among the Romiſh Clergy,

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that I am ſorry to ſay, they have almoſt loſt all credit with Proteſtants, and given them juſt grounds to queſtion their ſincerity even in an open diſavowal of the Papal Power to depoſe Kings; but if our Author doth not diſſemble his own, he certainly doth his Hero's principles, and even againſt ſuch ſtrong preſumptions that it is not in the power of ſophiſtry to palliate or excuſe them.

The Pope having now the promiſes of the Emperor and the King of France for acting againſt Henry, thought no time was to be loſt, and immediately commiſſioned Pole to go to them with this Excommunication and Depoſition; and excite them to turn their arms againſt the King of England. The Cardinal gladly accepted of this office, as it raiſed in him freſh hopes, and ſoothed his ambition: Mr. Phillips aſſerts that he made no uſe of the depoſing part; it cannot, ſays he, be objected againſt him that the negotiation was in ſome part founded on the ſuppoſition that Henry, in virtue of the Papal ſentence, had forfeited his right to the Kingdom, ſince whatever the Legate's private opinion might have been of the Pope's depoſing power in general; certain it is

that he never inſtigated the Courts, to which he was ſent to act in conſequence of it: for the proof of which certainty he appeals to a ſolemn declaration of Pole to Edward the ſixth, which he ſays is a voucher above exception. Here this Author takes it for granted that whatever Pole ſaith muſt be true, and ſhould be admitted by all the world as ſuch, though his whole conduct in this affair directly contradicts it; but ſhould Pole's veracity be ever ſo unexceptionable, yet it ſeems he only ſpeaks in this declaration to Edward the Sixth of his firſt embaſſy to the Low Countries, and not of this laſt; ſo that this Biographer's certainty hath no voucher at all to ſupport it, and he might have aſſerted with as much confidence that Pole omitted any other part or the whole of his inſtructions. There can be likewiſe no doubt what the Cardinal's private opinion was concerning the Papal Power; for his Holineſs would never have made choice of him for his Legate, had he not been very well aſſured of his real ſentiments upon it; neither can it admit of the leaſt diſpute whether Pole acted agreeable to theſe ſentiments, if it be conſidered what he had in charge from the Pope. His inſtructions,

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it ſeems, were to lay before his Imperial Majeſty the whole conduct of the King of England, in order to prevail on him to uſe his beſt endeavours for bringing back his Kingdom to a worſhip it had been conſtrained to forſake, and putting an end to enormities not leſs deſtructive of mankind than hateful to GOD; that the Emperor would find a conformity of ſentiments in the King of Scotland, and the new Cardinal Beaton, on whoſe ability and credit great ſtreſs might be laid; and in concluſion, that all farther communication with Henry ſhould be broke off; and that the leagues againſt the Turk, and all other buſineſs ſhould be entirely laid aſide for the preſent, that they might have nothing to divert them from exerting their confederate Powers againſt the King of England.

Theſe inſtructions, Mr. Phillips acknowledges were penned in a very looſe ſtile, for which the importance of the matter conſidered it may be hard to account: and if it be added, that this Excommunication had been drawn up, reviſed, and corrected, for ſeveral years before, it would be ſtill harder to account for the particular inſtructions upon them, if they had not been perfectly conformable to the principles and

practices of all who were concerned in them: they have likewiſe, continues our Author, an hoſtile air with reſpect to Henry, ſo that it may ſeem extraordinary, the Legate ſhould take upon him ſuch a commiſſion. They had indeed an extreme hoſtile air when they abſolved all Henry's Subjects from their allegiance to him, and commanded every power in Europe to aid and aſſiſt them in depoſing and murdering him by whatever means it could be done. But to whom could this undertaking of the Legate ſeem extraordinary, when all the world knew how agreeable it was to his aſpiring temper, and that it ſet before him ſo flattering a proſpect of aſcending the Engliſh Throne?

Though Phillips had but a few pages before dogmatically aſſerted, that Pole never inſtigated the Emperor to act according to that part of his inſtructions which related to Henry's depoſition, yet he now ſeems to queſtion his own authority, or at leaſt the credit of others upon it, and ſeeing facts ſo very ſtrong againſt him, he proceeds to clear up the difficulty of the Cardinal's engaging in meaſures to dethrone his Sovereign, by attempting to juſtify him in it: For he ſays that Pole had the precedent

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of the Barons, who called over the Dauphin of France to free them from the frantic tyranny of King John, and that which happened in his own times of Henry VII. who though an alien to the crown, was choſe by the unanimous conſent of the nation to reſcue them from the oppreſſion of Richard III. The evils which oppreſſed his country with reſpect to property, conſcience, and life itſelf, perſuaded Pole of the lawfulneſs of having recourſe to ſimilar means, in order to redreſs wrongs which had no other proſpect of remedy; the near alliance he had to the Crown, and the obligations which this laid him under of being particularly vigilant for the welfare of his Country, ſeem to have left him more at large as to the expedients which were to reſcue it from ſuch oppreſſions. B. i. p. 242, 243.

The far greater part of the Lords and Commons, and more than one half of the Gentry and Commonalty of the Kingdom were Proteſtants, and many of the Roman Catholicks approved of the alterations which had been made in Religion; even Tunſtall and Gardiner, with ſeveral other Romiſh Biſhops, wrote in defence of the Regal Supremacy; and the Duke of Norfolk commanded the King's army againſt

againſt the Rebels, who had taken up arms upon the ſuppreſſion of the leſſer Monaſteries. Yet all theſe were as nothing in the eſtimation of Pole or Phillips; the Proteſtants were dead as to ſpirituals, and therefore were to be looked upon as cyphers in temporals, and to be exterminated as ſoon as poſſible; the other were ſtrays, and wanted their chief ſhepherd to recall them to their fold; thus the whole nation was unanimous for depoſing Henry, and joined in one voice to call over Pole to ſupplant and ſucceed him, in the ſame manner as it was for calling over the Dauphin of France, and the Earl of Richmond: And this indiſputable unanimity had convinced Pole of the lawfulneſs of having recourſe to ſimilar means, that is, to plunge the nation into a civil war, and to cut of all its dead and rotten members.

The near alliance Pole had to the Crown is a very equivocal expreſſion; if Mr. Phillips means by it his affinity to the crowned Head and his Family, then his near relation to him, and the many ſignal favours he had received from him, obliged him (Pole) in a moſt particular manner to protect and defend him from all Rebels, Traitors, and Depoſers, and not to be the Rebel, Traitor, and Depoſer himſelf.

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But if this Author means by Pole's alliance, his right to the Crown, then the obligation which this right laid him under, left him it ſeems at large to uſe any violent expedients, not only for extirpating and murdering Henry, but his Son Edward, and his Daughter Elizabeth, with all the Heirs that ſtood before him to the Crown; that after the example of his great uncle Richard III. he might clear the way, and wade through ſeas of blood to the pinnacle of his ambition.

Pole went with his inſtrument of Excommunication and Depoſition to Spain, in order to excite the Emperor to a declaration of war againſt England, in conjunction with France, for the dethroning of Henry: But though there had been a truce concluded between theſe two Potentates, yet they were jealous and afraid of each other, and both reſolved within themſelves not to break with Henry. The Emperor therefore received the Legate very coldly, and ſignified to him that the preſent juncture was unſeaſonable for the execution of what the Pope required; and to get rid of his ſollicitations, he adviſed Pole to go to the French Court and ſound their diſpoſitions; for

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by them he ſhould regulate his own. Pole was thoroughly mortified at this diſappointment, all his hopes were again blaſted in the bud, and he could not help repreſenting to the Emperor, that as he was the Prince particularly marked out by Heaven to aſſiſt England in her day of diſtreſs, and had refuſed to give her any ſuccour, he muſt expect the divine vengeance to fall upon his head. And ſome time after in a letter to his friend Contareni, he attributed the Emperor's defeat by the Turk to a judgment of the Almighty, for not falling upon Henry, and flighting the Pope's Excommunication and Depoſition of him.

LETTER XXVI.

LORD Herbert affirms in his Hiſtory, that Cardinal Pole laboured with all his power, by means of his correſpondents in England, to alienate the hearts of the Subjects from the King, and to foment a civil war in the Nation, by publiſhing every where that Henry had ſubverted all Religion to ſet up his own fictions. And Burnet in particular aſſerts, that ſeveral have thought the Cardinal had ſome private views, which concerned not Religion; he was of the Houſe of York by his Mother, and is ſaid alſo to have had an inclination for the Princeſs Mary, and to beſtir himſelf thus in order to marry and ſet her on the Throne in the room of her Father; at leaſt there is reaſon to ſuſpect his extraordinary zeal was fortified by ſome hidden views, and that in acting for the Pope he was labouring his own advancement. B. i. p. 221.

Sir Jeffrey Pole, the Cardinal's own Brother, privately informed the King that he held a correſpondence with Henry Courtney, Marquis of Exeter, Grandſon of Edward the Fourth; Lord Montague; Sir Edward Nevil; and Sir

Nicholas Carew, Maſter of the Horſe: and that Pole's agents were a Prieſt and a Mariner. All theſe were upon this information apprehended, condemned, and executed: but the informer was pardoned, as a reward for his intelligence: ſoon after the Cardinal's Mother, the Counteſs of Saliſbury, was apprehended, and after two years impriſonment, executed for the ſame offence. But notwithſtanding the hoſtile meaſures, which Pole had entered into, and the expedients which he thought himſelf at large to make uſe of for depoſing his Royal Patron, as have been above related, yet his Biographer roundly aſſerts that gratitude was a cardinal virtue in this illuſtrious perſon; that he had been declared a Traitor, for cauſes which in their own nature did not ſeem to come up to the article of Treaſon; and that the only crime of the afore-mentioned perſons was (not their correſpondence with, but) their affinity to him. Pole likewiſe always preſumes upon his own and their innocency; he aſſerts, that no one ever queſtioned the duty and allegiance of theſe accomplices (though his own brother had informed againſt them for their treaſonable correſpondence with him); that their whole conduct was faultleſs, unleſs in too great obſequi-

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ouſneſs to Henry's councils; that a reſolution to deliver their Country from evils was ſalutary, and would have juſtified ſuch an enterprize; but even this charge which was brought againſt them was not made out, for if it had, it would have been publiſhed in vindication of the murder of ſome of the nobleſt and beſt men of the Realm; but as he (Pole) could find nothing of that Kind, he could only diſcover, what he had long ſuſpected, the Tyrant's hatred to virtue and the nobility.

Now from a review of the whole of Pole's conduct, with reſpect to his King and Country, as ſet forth by himſelf and his Biographer, nothing can be more evident than that both their vindications of it neceſſarily ſuppoſe and are founded upon ſuch like principles as theſe, viz. that

Whoever acts for the good of the Church, or the advancement of the Papal and Hierarchical Power, is diſcharged from the obligations of honeſty, honour, conſcience, and allegiance to Hereticks and Schiſmaticks; that all ſuch pious intentions will give a ſanction to ingratitude, hypocriſy, treaſon, rebellion, conſpiracies, and aſſaſinations of every kind: and that whoever acts in oppoſition to the Pope and the

Hierarchy, hath forfeited all his right of ſelf defence, is a Devil incarnate, an outcaſt of Heaven, and by any means to be extirpated from the earth.

It is amazing to ſee the heights which the bigots of the Romiſh Church have carried the authority of their Pontiff and Clergy: They oppoſe and exalt them above all that is called GOD, or that is worſhipped; attributing Powers to them which even Omnipotence itſelf diſclaimeth; ſuppoſing them capable of performing impoſſibilities, reconciling contradictions, diſſolving all moral duties, converting good into evil and evil into good; ſanctifying falſhood and fraud, and cancelling the laws of natural and revealed Religion: Biſhop White aſſerts, that when men depart from the Church, they loſe all criterion of truth and falſhood in matters of Religion, and muſt neceſſarily be carried about with every wind of Doctrine. Cardinal Cuſanus in his epiſtle to the Bohemians ſays, that the word of GOD is moſt worthy when it is fartheſt removed from all Scripture, that the Scriptures muſt be explained by the prevailing rites of the Church, and that when the Church changes her decrees the will of GOD is changed with them. And

Bellarmine,

Bellarmine, that renowned champion of the Church of Rome, Cardinal and Archbiſhop, affirms, that ſhould the Pope declare virtues to be vices, and vices virtues, good Chriſtians are in conſcience bound to believe him. And theſe are the Doctrines, not of a few individuals, but of the whole Romiſh Church, maintained by Popes, and confirmed by General Councils: And in particular the Emperor Sigiſmond gave a ſafe conduct to John Huſs for paſſing through his dominions; and the Council at Conſtance ſolemnly and publickly promiſed Jerome of Prague ſafety and protection, if he would come to Conſtance; in their engagement indeed they had inſerted this condition, without prejudice to juſtice, and as far as the Catholick Faith required it. But when they had got theſe two perſons into their power, the Fathers of the Council unanimouſly decreed, that they were ſeditious, obſtinate, incorrigible followers and defenders of Wickliff; hardened, crafty, malicious, and convicted Hereticks; that they could not protect them without violating juſtice; and the Catholick Faith required that they ſhould be cut off as corrupt members of the Church, holding impious, horrible, and damnable Tenets; and

therefore

therefore the Council condemned them to be burnt alive, and had them executed accordingly. From whence it is evident that this was an enſnaring condition, added with a premeditated deſign to betray the confidence that ſhould be placed upon it; and that the Romiſh Church requires its members to practice hypocriſy, to keep no faith with Proteſtants, and to grant every appearance, but not the leaſt ſubſtance of a protection.

As theſe principles are inconſiſtent with the fundamental maxims of government, and ſubverſive of the very nature of ſociety, the perſons who eſpouſe them, have no title to be tolerated in it. And that Community which is ſo indulgent as to take ſuch Rattle-ſnakes into its boſom, muſt ſuppoſe that they from the badneſs of their conſtitution, will never gather ſtrength ſufficient to give a mortal bite; or if they ſhould, it will be by ſuch a gradual increaſe, that timely notice will be given for ſhaking them off: but where errors are of ſuch fatal conſequence, and knowledge and circumſpection are the only ſecurity, the duties which ſelf-preſervation lays upon ſociety, call loudly upon every member of it, to have an extreme

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watchful and jealous eye over ſuch a dangerous and deſperate Generation of Vipers.

But to return to Pole's Character. The bigotry which had rivetted him to the See of Rome, rendered him exceſſively credulous and ſuperſtitious, and he was addicted no leſs than his Biographer, to engroſs Providence to himſelf, and interpret natural occurrences into divine judgments upon his adverſaries, which are preſumptions peculiar to Miracle-mongers and Religioniſts; the defeat of the Emperor by the Turk, juſt now mentioned, is a remarkable inſtance of this kind; and the Cardinal's own narration of what occurred to him in his viſit to the Cavern near the great Road between Aix and Marſeilles, called Sainte Beaume, is ſo full a proof of his weakneſs, credulity, and ſuperſtition, that no other confirmation will be wanted on this head.

An ancient tradition, he ſays, had ſuppoſed that Mary Magdalene, Martha, and Lazarus, were in hatred to our Lord, ſhipped off in a tattered veſſel, after his aſcenſion, and conducted by providence to the Coaſt of Provence, where the Women are ſaid to paſs the remainder of their days: This ſtory is ſo romantick, that it even exceeds Phillips's faith, for he thinks

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that the fitneſs of the place for penitential exerciſes, gave birth to this opinion: But the Cardinal's credulity was capacious enough to contain it, for he went out of his way on purpoſe to viſit this Sanctuary, in which he expreſsly aſſerts that the remains of the holy Penitent were depoſited; here he ſent up an earneſt ſupplication for the King, and fell into a long fit of weeping, but he felt not the inward comfort he deſired, as a pledge of his requeſt being granted, but rather ſeemed to hear a voice which increaſed his affliction, and was the ſame which ſaid to the Prophet, who was likewiſe ſupplicating for his Sovereign, why doſt thou lament a Perſon whom I have caſt off? B. 1. P. 272, 273.

The Cardinal's zeal for the Pope had frequently ſuppreſſed his remorſe of conſcience for his ingratitude to the King; and here the place and circumſtances prompting him to indulge his ſuperſtition, it was no wonder that it triumphed over his allegiance to his Sovereign, and vented itſelf in that ſuberb ſtyle, Why doſt thou lament one whom I have caſt off? Such is the nature of Enthuſiaſm, that when it has once got compleat poſſeſſion of the mind, it preſumptuouſly perſonates the ſupreme Being,

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and delivers itſelf as His Oracle, whilſt the Enthuſiaſt himſelf is verily perſuaded, that its blaſphemous dictates proceed from the Holy Spirit of God: As Pole through its influences gave credit to the wild tradition concerning this Cavern, ſo he miſtook the tranſports of his over-heated imagination, for divine energies, and believed the perſons whom his frantic zeal had ejected from his own favour were the real outcaſts of Heaven.

The laſt thing propoſed to be conſidered in Pole's character, was his temper in reſpect to the Proteſtants: and here it is to be obſerved that the commendations which moſt of our Hiſtorians have beſtowed upon him for his moderation, are to be underſtood only in a relative ſenſe, or in compariſon with the fury of the flaming Bigots of thoſe times, who are ſaid to have excluded him from their Councils for Perſecutions; for the ſame may be applied to him as was to his friend Sadolet, that he was moderate for a Papiſt, but uncharitable as a Chriſtian; and for the proof of it I appeal to his own declaration and behaviour: For in his letter to the Biſhop of Auſbourg he acknowledges, that the caſe ſuppoſed of any one's opinion being extremely pernicious, and

he no leſs induſtrious to corrupt others than depraved himſelf, I might ſay ſuch a one might be capitally puniſhed, and as a rotten member cut off from the body. B. ii. p. 164.

Mr. Phillips, as a proof of the Cardinal's lenity, ſays, that only two perſons were put to Death for their Religion when he was Governour of Viterbo, a principal city in the Pope's patrimony. Theſe executions, ſuppoſing them to be as related, were probably very few in compariſon to what were at that time in other parts of the Pope's dominions; yet it is with religious lenity as with juſtice, for as two or three iniquitous acts are ſufficient to denominate a man unjuſt, ſo as few executions at the ſtake will conſtitute the Character of an intolerant perſecuting temper.

This Author likewiſe acknowledges, that a commiſſion was iſſued out from the Cardinal, on occaſion of ſeveral pernicious Doctrines taught and propagated in the Dioceſe of Canterbury, to apprehend the perſons accuſed of them, to excommunicate, and if the atrociouſneſs of the Crime required it, to deliver them over to the Civil Magiſtrate; in conſequence of which commiſſion he informs their Majeſties

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of ſome who had been convicted, and leaves them to be puniſhed as they deſerved. b. ii. p. 165.

But all commiſſions for perſecuting Hereticks in this Kingdom, at that time, came from him as the Pope's Legate; and it is ſaid that in order to purge away the ſuſpicion of Heterodoxy, and the ſcandalous charge of favouring Lutherans, which Pope Paul IV. had laid to him, he was more than ordinarily zealous for extirpating the Proteſtants.

Some of our Hiſtorians affirm, that the perſecution in Mary's reign raged chiefly in the Dioceſe of London and in Kent; and Fox in particular aſſerts, that five perſons were burnt for hereſy at Canterbury not many days before the Cardinal's death.

Mr. Phillips mentions Cardinal Pole's being choſen Chancellor of the Univerſities of Oxford and Cambridge; and he farther adds, concerning the former, that he reviſed and corrected their ſtatutes, B. ii. p. 172. But he paſſes over in ſilence his viſitation of both theſe places. What his reaſons were for ſuppreſſing theſe remarkable occurrences of his life, when he was ſo very minute in every other particular, are beſt known to himſelf; but he gives room for ſuſpecting that theſe viſitations reflected no

great honour on his Hero, and that ſome of his tranſactions there, if ſet in their true light, might caſt a ſhade upon the other parts of his character; for whilſt he, or his Deputy, was at Cambridge, Hiſtorians inform us, that Bucer and Fagius, two German Divines, dead ſome years before, were ridiculouſly cited before the Commiſſioners, to give an account of their Faith: and upon their non-appearance, were ordered to be burnt. This Sentence was followed by a warrant from the Court to execute it, and the two bodies in their coffins were tied to ſtakes and conſumed to aſhes.

At Oxford, the wife of Peter Martyr was dug out of her grave, by order of the Cardinal, and buried in a dunghill, becauſe, having been a Nun, ſhe had broke her vow; and in all appearance, the permitting Peter Martyr to go out of the Kingdom was heartily repented of, for if the body of his wife was thus treated, what might have been expected, had he been in the hands of his perſecutors?

Though the Proteſtants did not venerate the remains of theſe perſons, yet moſt of them thought the perſons themſelves as good Saints as the Papiſts did Thomas Becket, and might, in the ſame words, apply the like contraſt

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between the behaviour of the Turks in the Iſland of Rhodes and the Cardinal's violations of theſe honourable reliques, as he had made between the ſame Turks and Henry's impiety. Theſe conquerors, ſays he, though under all the prejudices of Mahometan ſuperſtition, had not removed any of the monuments of the Saints, which they found in the iſland, nor offered the leaſt inſult to them; they had even allowed the Chriſtians to take away ſeveral of theſe venerable remains, and had behaved throughout the whole affair, with the greateſt decency and humanity. B. i. p. 227.

As theſe Mahometans had almoſt as contemptible a notion of thoſe Saints, as the Cardinal had of theſe Lutherans, Bucer, Fagius, and Peter Martyr, it follows from his own reaſoning, that he had leſs humanity than they: beſides, what the Proteſtants did to Thomas Becket's tomb, was from a principle of removing the object of idolatrous worſhip, and convincing the people of their idle credulity; but what he and the Papiſts did to the bodies of theſe Proteſtants, was from the ſpirit of revenge and perſecution.

LETTER XXVII.

CARDINAL Bembo is introduced into this Hiſtory, and eminently diſtinguiſhed in his character, for being an acquaintance of Pole; though in his youthful days, according to Mr. Phillips's own account of him, he had wrote very licentious verſes, had alſo debauched a young Lady of Venice, and had three natural children by her: This love intrigue cauſed him to reject the ſollicitations by which his family preſſed him to marry; and this averſion likewiſe to matrimony might probably be a recommendation to Pope Leo X. for making him his Secretary of State, and to his Succeſſor Paul III. for advancing him to the Purple: The ſurprize of this laſt unexpected promotion had put him, it is ſaid, on the point of refuſing it; but a circumſtance intervened, which diſcovered his real inclination for accepting it; a circumſtance which confirms the general charge of Superſtition upon the Romaniſts, and alſo of the influence of that Superſtition through which they are wonderfully prone, inſtead of ſubmitting their will to the will of God, to bring his will to theirs. Bembo,

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in the words of our Author, going to church, the morning after he received the news, in order to aſk a ſuperior direction in the ſtep he was to take; as he approached the Altar, the Prieſt being come to thoſe words of Jeſus Chriſt to St. Peter, whoſe name Bembo bore, Peter follow me, he took them as addreſſed to himſelf, and no longer oppoſed a dignity which he had not ſought, and now interpreted it was the will of Heaven he ſhould accept. B. i. p. 279.

After this, he was honoured by perſons of the higheſt diſtinction, and particularly by Reginald Pole, who lived with him in the greateſt intimacy, and had the higheſt value for his many and excellent qualities. P. 279. Upon which character I ſhall only make this Remark, that Orthodoxy in the Papiſt, like Charity in the Chriſtian, will cover a multitude of ſins, and that high promotions in the Church, and a firm attachment to the Whore of Babylon, will ſufficiently atone for an attachment to a Venetian Courtezan.

Where there is little or no regard to truth, there ought to be a very ſtrong memory, for the prevention of inconſiſtencies and contradictions. Our Author, in one part of his

Book,

Book, ſays, that the Author of our Holy Religion left the government of human affairs to human inſtitutions; when on earth he refuſed to interfere with the ſettling a private inheritance, though at the requeſt of one of the parties, and left it to the legal proceedings in ſuch caſes; that he even rejected the propoſal with a kind of indignation, as foreign to the purpoſe he came on: nor do we any where find that dominion was founded on Grace. But Pope Gregory VII. confounded ſpiritual juriſdiction with temporal, and attempted on the rights of the latter, which are derived from human inſtitutions, and depend on the laws and conſtitutions of the reſpective States in which they have force. B. i. p. 238, 240.

And again, the puniſhments of the Catholick Church extend no farther than the ſpiritual ſtate of the offender; that the ſecular judge every where proceeds on this ſuppoſition, and the Church neither had nor ought to proceed any farther. B. ii. p. 167.

But Thomas Becket is celebrated by our Author for a Hero, a Patriot, a Guardian of the liberties of his country, a Saint, and a Martyr, for an unwarrantable diſobedience to his Sovereign, and an obſtinate contention for the immunities

immunities of the Clergy, from the laws of the land, and their exemption from the power of the Civil Magiſtrate, and the juriſdiction of the common Courts of Juſtice. Thomas Becket was the ſon of a Citizen of London, and bred to the Law; he was made Archdeacon of Canterbury, and afterwards, by Henry II. High Chancellor; in which office it is ſaid he behaved with intolerable pride and inſolence to all but the King, whom he ſerved with the moſt abject ſubmiſſion, till he was preferred to the Arch-biſhoprick of Canterbury; and then he ever after treated him as his inferior. The Hierarchy in thoſe days claimed an abſolute power over their own body, and maintained, that they were ſubject to no other but Eccleſiaſtical Courts, where their offences of every kind were to be tried, and from whence there was no appeal. And theſe trials were carried on with ſuch lenity, that the moſt heinous crimes were generally puniſhed only with degradation; and others with a ſhort ſuſpenſion, or confinement. It was proved before the King, that more than an hundred murders had been committed by Eccleſiaſticks ſince his acceſſion to the Throne, and not one of them puniſhed even with degradation; and the Biſhops gloried

in this indulgence, whilſt the Laity ſuffered the rigour of the Common Law. About this time Philip de Broc, a Clergyman in the Dioceſe of Sarum, committed a murder, for which he was tried in the Arch-biſhop's Court, and was deprived of his Benefice, and confined to a Monaſtery, or baniſhed. The King thought this puniſhment inadequate to his crime, which was capital by the law of the land, and remonſtrated with Becket againſt it, declaring at the ſame time his intention of having all ſuch crimes as Murder and Robbery, tried in the temporal Courts. To which Becket replied, that he would never ſuffer it: This was the occaſion and principal cauſe of all his violent oppoſition to the King, during the remainder of his life. He collated one Lawrence, a Prieſt, to the Rectory of Aineford, without regarding the Patron's right of preſentation; but the Patron, who was a Baron of the Realm, not willing to loſe his right, hindered Lawrence from taking poſſeſſion of the Benefice; for which offence Becket excommunicated him; who immediately applied to the King, and the King was extremely provoked at this daring inſolence of the Archbiſhop, for from William the Conqueror's time,

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it had been the Royal Prerogative that no Tenant in Capite ſhould be excommunicated without the King's knowledge; but Becket would pay no regard to it: And from that time, he proceeded to excommunicate perſons without the King's privity or conſent, and diſputed other Prerogatives of the Crown. Neither ſmooth nor rough meaſures could check the arrogance of this haughty Prelate.

Henry got the ſixteen articles of the Clarendon conſtitutions, containing the chief prerogatives and privileges of the King and Clergy, to be ratified by Parliament; which Becket with the Biſhops, though with great reluctance ſubſcribed to: The ſecond article of theſe conſtitutions was, that no Tenant in Chiefe, or any other of the King's officers, ſhould be excommunicated, or his Lands put under an interdict, without the King's conſent. The Pope refuſed to confirm them; upon which Becket repented of his ſigning them, and ſuſpended himſelf for a time from his Archiepiſcopal function, for being guilty of ſo atrocious a crime; but the Pope ſoon abſolved him, and aſſured him of his ſupport in his contention with the King.

Soon after this, he was accuſed of ſome abuſes of his truſt during his Chancellorſhip: to which he anſwered, that he was not bound to plead before Laymen, having the firſt Eccleſiaſtical dignity in the Kingdom; being therefore above all law, he refuſed to acknowledge the juriſdiction of the Court, and was thereupon judged contumacious, and a rebel to the authority of the Laws; for which contumacy his goods were confiſcated, and his accuſation farther aggravated with the Charge of Perjury and Treaſon.

But all this could not humble his proud ſpirit; for the Peers being aſſembled to give ſentence on his Treaſon, he came into the preſence of the King, with the moſt unparalleled audaciouſneſs, and inſulted him with a menace of excommunication: and when he was ordered to ſtay to hear his Sentence, he ſtill proteſted againſt their Authority, and ſeemed to challenge his accuſers to a ſingle combat. He left them in an abrupt manner, and went that night in diſguiſe to Flanders, and continued in exile for the ſpace of ſix years; when, by the mediation of the King of France, and the Pope, and moſt eſpecially by the influence of the Clergy

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at home, the King thought fit to pardon him, and reſtore him to his former dignities and powers, ſuppoſing that he would for the future behave in a more ſubmiſſive manner. But nothing could tame his revengeful temper; for he was no ſooner landed in England than he ſuſpended the Archbiſhop of York, and excommunicated the Biſhops of London, Durham, and Exeter, becauſe they had taken the King's part againſt him. Theſe Prelates complained of this treatment to the King, who was then in Normandy, and threw themſelves at his feet; upon which the King, being highly exaſperated at the inſolence of a Subject whom he had raiſed from the duſt, dropt that expreſſion which ſome of his domeſticks made an handle of for entering into a conſpiracy to deſtroy the Arch-biſhop, and which they ſoon after effected. Thus Becket fell a Martyr to his own haughtineſs and obſtinacy, and to the independency of the Clergy upon the civil Courts of Juſtice, and the laws of the Land. He did not ſuffer for any article of the Chriſtian Faith, or doctrine of the Chriſtian Church; he was only a pertinacious vindicator of thoſe pretended immunities and privileges which were inconſiſtent with the peace of the community, and

ſubverſive of the very principles of government: and though this Biographer here calls them legal claims, and dogmatically aſſerts, that they bore no leſs a part of the conſtitution than any other immunities in the great charter; yet in other places of his book already cited, he acknowledges, that the juriſdiction of the Eccleſiaſtical Courts reached only to ſpirituel things; that all temporal cauſes belonged to the temporal Courts, were to be tried by the civil Magiſtrate, and were cognizable only by him. The whole merit therefore of Becket's heroiſm and patriotiſm conſiſted in a malignant and turbulent temper, which ſhewed itſelf in an invincible reſolution of maintaining an exemption of ſome members of the ſociety from the ſupreme powers of that ſociety, and an extenſion of the Eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction to every cauſe wherein the Clergy were concerned; for this, and this only, he was canonized by the Pope and the Hierarchy, and was celebrated by our Author, as one of the moſt venerable Martyrs upon earth, and the higheſt Saints in heaven.

LETTER XXVIII.

GARDINER, Biſhop of Wincheſter, and Chancellor, was one of the principal perſons in carrying on the Divorce of Henry from Catharine of Arragon; he had been alſo a ſtrenuous aſſerter of the King's Supremacy, he wrote a book in vindication of it, in anſwer to Pole's Treatiſe, *De Unitate Eccleſiæ*, and had run into all the meaſures of the Court, to ingratiate himſelf with King Henry. Theſe things were great provocations to the Pope and the Church of Rome, and would have ſet him on a level with Cromwell, Cranmer, Ridley, and other Hereſiarchs, of thoſe times, had he not made ample amends for them by his violent proceedings againſt the Reformed, as well in this as in the ſucceeding reigns.

Hence Cardinal Pole ſays of him, in his Letter to the Univerſity of Oxford, that he, having been a part of the common fall, was permitted to live; and when the time of raiſing the ruins was come, had more than any one elſe contributed to ſo laudable an undertaking. B. ii. p. 171.

For

For the ſame reaſon he is characterized by Mr. Phillips, as a perſon of great eloquence and univerſal knowledge, with abilities equal to each ſtation to which he gradually roſe, and always filled ſo as to attract the publick obſervation; that he was clear in a great meaſure of the imputation of cruelty on account of Religion; that he adviſed the Queen to acts of lenity; his attention alſo to the ſpirit of the conſtitution, and his care to exclude foreign influence from Britiſh Councils, except in the inſtance of the Queen's Marriage with the Prince of Spain, can never be too much commended: to the abundant proofs of his being an able Magiſtrate and Stateſman, we are, ſays he, to add thoſe of the Scholar and the Writer, which, though neither many nor voluminous, ſufficiently ſhew the Author's abilities. B. ii, p, 120, 121.

Though Gardiner had gone theſe lengths to preſerve his intereſt with the King, yet he was ſtill a Romaniſt in his heart, and was the head of that Party, with the Duke of Norfolk, and others. He was almoſt the only perſon who framed and adviſed the famous ſix Articles, as teſts of the Romiſh Religion, or what was called

called the Bloody Statute; and well it deſerves that title, for it was more ſevere than the Statute *De Heretico comburendo*, and many Proteſtants, even in that reign, were burnt for their non-compliance with it: Gardiner likewiſe vigorouſly oppoſed the Reformation in Edward's minority, and was impriſoned the moſt part of that reign. But when Mary aſcended the Throne, he was reſtored to his Biſhoprick, and made Chancellor. In his Speech to the Parliament, which met in order to make due ſubmiſſion to the Pope before his Legate, for their revolt, and to receive Abſolution from him, he acknowledged himſelf to have been of the number of the delinquents, exhorted them to riſe from their fallen ſtate, and diſpoſe themſelves to a reconciliation with the common parent of all, who are entitled to the promiſes of the Goſpel. B. ii. p. 82.

He affected an exceſſive zeal for the Romiſh Religion, and perhaps greater than he really had, to compenſate for his former defects, and to recommend himſelf to a bigoted Queen; by which means he became her Favourite and firſt Miniſter; and when his power was fully eſtabliſhed, he then took his revenge upon his enemies, who had proceeded no farther againſt

him than confining and detaining him in priſon; but he could not be ſatisfied without burning them alive. The Biſhops, Ridley, and Latimer, with many others, felt the terrible effects of his vengeance; whoſe execution he impatiently waited for, and deferred going to dinner on that day, till the news of it was brought him by a ſpecial meſſenger: And here, if I was as preſumptuous as Mr. Phillips, or dared to make as free with the Divine Judgments, I might with as much reaſon apply them to Gardiner upon this occaſion, as he hath upon any other; for the Biſhop had hardly dined, when he was ſeized with a ſuppreſſion of urine, which in a few days put an end to a life of ambition, craft, and perſecution.

The character which Hiſtorians give of Henry VIII. is almoſt as bad as what Mr. Phillips hath drawn for him, though not altogether for the ſame reaſons. For though he had been the principal perſon in the ſuppreſſion of the Religious Houſes, and had aſſumed the Supremacy of the Church in theſe Kingdoms, by which means, as our author obſerves, he, like an unſkilful pilot, had run the veſſel on thoſe rocks, which tore away the rudder,

and

and disjointed the whole frame, p. 436. yet ſtill he continued of that ſhip's crew, he was always a Roman Catholic, and died a Member of that communion: and the ſix articles, which contain the fundamental doctrines of that Church, and were enforced by him under the ſevereſt penalties, are inconteſtable proofs of his being no Proteſtant. I ſhall therefore make only one obſervation upon what our Biographer hath been pleaſed to ſay of him. "No ſingle inſtance, ſays he, can be produced where the Supreme Being, when he was about to reveal to men any important truth which had been unknown in all paſt ages, or to reclaim them from an exemplary degeneracy, had ever choſen ſo ſcandalous a King as Henry VIII. or ſuch ſervile and corrupt Miniſters, both in Church and State, as that Prince made uſe of." B. i. p. 432.

By this he would inſinuate, that there was no exemplary degeneracy in the Church of Rome, and ſeems to apply the wickedneſs of the King and his Miniſters as an argument againſt the Reformation. In like manner he thinks to calumniate, and even refute the Proteſtant cauſe, by giving credit to that idle ſtory of Luther's familiarity with the Devil, and

producing his own confeſſion of his conference with, and converſion to Proteſtantiſm by, the ſpirit of deſtruction. The ſtory is ſo ridiculous in itſelf, that our Author expoſes his own weakneſs and prejudice, by giving it a place in his books, and any attempts to diſprove it would render it leſs trifling than it really is; and if it was true, it would prove nothing againſt the Reformation. It is a very fallacious way of diſproving any religious tenets, by the morals of thoſe perſons who have eſpouſed them; becauſe there are good and bad profeſſors of all religions: and Mr. Phillips might with more reaſon argue againſt the Chriſtian Religion in general, becauſe the traitor Judas was made an inſtrument for the bringing about the redemption of mankind, than he doth againſt the Reformation, from the characters of Henry VIII. and his Miniſters. It is preſumption to determine the methods of God's providence, or to aſſert what he cannot do, or never did, unleſs it be manifeſtly abſurd in itſelf, or derogatory of his divine perfections: and if I may be allowed to uſe *argumentum ad hominem*, it is eaſy to refute our Author in his own way, or to turn his own reaſoning againſt himſelf. For the defection of the

Proteſtants

Proteſtants was in his eſtimation an exemplary degeneracy from the Catholic Church: he will alſo very readily grant, that Queen Mary and her Miniſters, Gardiner and Bonner, were choſen by the Supreme Being for reclaiming her Subjects from this degeneracy; but I appeal to the records of both reigns, and to the facts which all Hiſtorians agree in, whether there were not many more acts of barbarity and bloodſhed committed by this Queen and theſe Biſhops, than there were by her Father and his Miniſters? and whether the general characters of the former are not more ſcandalous, more abominable, and more corrupt than the latter?

The ſame kind of argument might be urged from the example of the Emperor Charles V. who about theſe times deſtroyed multitudes of Lutherans in Germany; and alſo from that of his Son Philip, King of Spain, and his General and Plenipotentiary, the Duke of Alva, who, by our Author's own account, put incredible numbers of Proteſtants to death, in the Low Countries.

But to conclude this head, Mr. Phillips would not ſcruple to acknowledge Fernando Cortes,

Cortes, with the Miſſionaries that accompanied him, to be inſtruments in the hands of Providence for revealing the important truths of Chriſtianity to the natives of South America, where by killing ſome hundred thouſands of theſe defenceleſs Indians with his fire-arms, he conquered Mexico, convinced the reſidue of the people of their Idolatries, and converted them to the Chriſtian Religion.

All theſe were perſons who lived near the times of the Reformation, and whoſe characters were more vile than that of Henry VIII. or any of his Miniſters.

LETTER XXIX.

CROMWELL and Cranmer were the two principal Miniſters of State to Henry VIII. who adviſed and conducted the Reformation, and conſequently they were moſt obnoxious to the Papiſts; who charged them with all the crimes that incenſed malice could invent, or the mouth of ſcandal could bellow forth againſt them. I will begin with ſome ſtrictures on the character which is drawn for Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Eſſex; "who our Author ſays, inſtructed Henry in the arbitrary extent of Prerogative, and became the inſtrument by which he exerted it." B. i. p. 42.

"Henry had no ſooner aſſumed the Supremacy of the Church, but he thought of making it as lucrative as poſſible, and appointed a Vicar in his ſpiritual capacity, every way ſuited to ſuch a principal and ſuch purpoſes. This Miniſter, Thomas Cromwell, had taken care to inform the King of his talents for deſtruction, and being unreſtrained by any principle, human or divine, and the brutal ſavageneſs of his mind equal to his vile extraction,

tion, he was alike qualified to plan and execute his Prince's worſt deſigns." B. i. p. 164.

And again, " The execution of Cromwell was attended with every aggravation of guilt that can fill up the meaſure of wretchedneſs, and make the criminal feel the whole weight both of his guilt and puniſhment. From a birth as ſordid as can debaſe even the dregs of the common people, he had been ſucceſſively raiſed to the higheſt dignities: his Adminiſtration from the beginning had been hateful to the Commons on every account, which could make the exerciſe of his public ſtation unpopular and odious; and the Nobles had their particular reaſons of averſion in ſeeing a Blackſmith's ſon ſet above them all; and deemed their honours vilified, by being communicated to an Upſtart. He was one of the worſt of Men, and moſt pernicious Miniſters that ever directed the Councils of a Tyrant, or oppreſſed a nation; nothing was undertaken or thought on to the emolument and honour of England, during his whole Adminiſtration; and the tranſactions of theſe ten years amount to no more than a tale of woe, which blends the Monarch's and the Miniſter's crimes with the nation's miſery. B. i. p. 291, 293.

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There is nothing which ſhews the abilities of this celebrated Stateſman more than the ſurprizing progreſs he made in the Reformation, by ſuch artful means as could induce the moſt bigotted and ſtrenuous Defender of the Roman Catholick Faith as ever ſat upon the Throne of theſe Kingdoms, to remove the mightieſt obſtacles that impeded it, without being ſenſible that he contributed any thing towards it. The means he applied were the Regal Supremacy of the Church, and the ſuppreſſion of the Religious Houſes; the greateſt benefits that could be conferred upon this Nation; for by the firſt its Peace was entirely reſtored, and the Nation was at unity in itſelf; and from the other, the Commerce, Wealth, and Populouſneſs of it commenced, which have gradually riſen to that amazing height which they now are; ſo that not only the Proteſtants, but the whole body of the People in all ſucceeding ages, are indebted to this Miniſter, and ought in gratitude to place him in the firſt rank of Britiſh Worthies.

Henry had been fully initiated in all the principles of arbitrary power, when Cromwell came to the Adminiſtration, and had too long indulged himſelf in the unbounded exerciſe

of it in all civil affairs, to need an inſtructor, or to brook any oppoſition. The fortunate circumſtance of the King's quarrel with the Pope, concerning the divorce from his Queen, afforded a fair opportunity to the Leaders of the Proteſtants, for ſuggeſting to him, how inconſiſtent it was with the nature of Government to have two independent ſupreme powers in the ſame Kingdom, which could not but foment endleſs diſtractions; that the only way to prevent them was to have but one Sovereign, and to make the Head of the State the Head of the Church. This was ſo agreeable to his ruling paſſions, that he readily liſtened to it; and though he was firmly attached to the Romiſh Religion, yet his pride and ambition got the aſcendant of his zeal; and he did not perceive that he was weakening that building, by pulling down the main pillar, when he ſubſtituted ſo great a ſupporter of it as himſelf in its room: he therefore immediately deprived the Pope of his Supremacy in theſe Kingdoms, and inveſted himſelf with it. The affairs of Europe were at that juncture in ſuch a critical ſituation, that every State courted his alliance, and England was alſo within itſelf ſo equally ballanced between Proteſtants and Papiſts,

piſts, that he could turn the ſcale to which ever ſide he inclined. Hence both parties were extremely ſollicitous of gaining him; for which reaſon he met with leſs oppoſition than could be imagined; and what rendered it ſtill leſs, was the violence of his temper, which could not bear the leaſt contradiction; ſo that few, even of the moſt bigotted Romaniſts, thought it either prudent or ſafe openly to oppoſe him, and indeed it proved fatal to moſt of thoſe who did. The Monks were faſt friends of the Pope, and were continually inveighing againſt this uſurpation of the King, and alienating the affections of his People from him: Theſe provocations, together with the lure of their wealth, were generally ſuppoſed to be his principal inducements for their ſuppreſſion. But the Leaders of the Reformation had other reaſons: for they were ſenſible, that the Proteſtant Religion could never be effectually eſtabliſhed while theſe Religious Houſes continued, and therefore they prompted the King to diſſolve them; and were glad to have Cromwell appointed Viſitor, to enquire into, and report the abuſes of them to the King; and though he was probably not inclined in this office to ſhew them much favour, yet

there is no reaſon to charge him with any falſe or unfair repreſentations of them. Some of theſe abuſes indeed were ſo very ſhocking, that ſeveral of the Monks, ſtruck with the conſciouſneſs of guilt and fear of puniſhment, were glad to compound the affair, by a voluntary ſurrender of their Houſes and Eſtates to the King, to avoid a farther diſquiſition: and the other being afraid to diſpute the power of the Legiſlature, quietly ſubmitted to the Decrees of the Parliament concerning them; and however the Papiſts in general were exaſperated at theſe proceedings, they dared not ſhew their reſentment to the King; but the whole weight of their diſpleaſure fell upon his Miniſters, and moſt eſpecially upon Cromwell, who had been by theſe two new offices of Vicar and Viſitor General, raiſed to the moſt conſpicuous and dangerous eminence; for the firſt being the higheſt dignity of the Church, he was entitled to a rank next to the Royal Family. This Precedency to all the Nobility excited the envy of many of them, who could not bear to ſee a perſon of ſo low extraction ſet above them: and both theſe poſts marked him out for the peculiar object of the indignation and malice of the Papiſts, who at length,

length, through the influence of a Roman Catholick Queen and her Relations, prevailed over him, and triumphed in his fall. When theſe enemies had perſuaded the King to have him committed and brought to his trial, they had no particular crimes to alledge againſt him, and were therefore obliged to proſecute him by a Bill of Attainder, and had him condemned without any proof or liberty of defence. Our Author violently exclaimed againſt this method of proceeding, in the caſe of the Marchioneſs of Exeter, and the Counteſs of Saliſbury; and ſaid, that it was contrary to all right, and that even the farce of juſtice was ſuperſeded: but the caſe was altered with reſpect to Cromwell; here it was no more than what he deſerved, and his crimes, though not ſpecified, called for the moſt capital puniſhments. There was alſo no one circumſtance at his execution, which could juſtify Mr. Phillips's aſſertion, "that it was attended with every aggravation of guilt, that could fill up the meaſure of wretchedneſs, and make the criminal feel the whole weight both of his guilt and puniſhment;" for he betrayed no ſign of the one, nor fear of the other. And that nothing might be omitted which could blacken his character,

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he produces a detail of a private converſation which paſſed between him and Pole, in Wolſey's Palace, which ſtands entirely upon the ſingle teſtimony of Pole, who was his inveterate enemy; and if there was any ſuch converſation, it cannot be ſuppoſed that Cromwell delivered his real ſentiments in it, becauſe it is not confirmed by his future conduct; for the Hiſtorians of thoſe times deſcribe him as a perſon of wonderful moderation, condeſcenſion, affability and gratitude; and aſſert, that Henry loved both Cranmer and Cromwell, and believed them to be men of ſolid virtue and piety; who were for preſerving the eſſentials of Religion, though they were deſirous of reforming ſome abuſes in it; and indeed the King ſeemed to repent of putting this Miniſter to death; for he endeavoured to make what ſatisfaction he could to his injured family, in creating that very year his ſon Gregory a Peer of the Realm, by the title of Lord Cromwell.

LETTER XXX.

ARchbiſhop Cranmer acted jointly with the Earl of Eſſex, in carrying on the Reformation during the reign of Henry VIII. and was one of the Regents who forwarded it in Edward's minority: for which reaſons Mr. Phillips hath culled from every Author whatever he thought could villify him, and by heightening it with his own colouring, and blending it with ſome ſcandals of his own raiſing, hath drawn a character of him, which every perſon of the leaſt diſcernment muſt perceive to be the compoſition of a Romiſh Bigot, and which none but the moſt Prieſt-ridden Laymen of that Church can approve. Was a contraſt to be drawn of this character, by collecting, enlarging, and adding to whatever hath been ſaid in his praiſe, it would be difficult as well as troubleſome for the Reader to form a true judgment of him from two ſuch different repreſentations. I will therefore endeavour to give a juſt character of this Reformer, by exhibiting his real failings, refuting, what this Author hath falſely or fooliſhly charged

charged him with, and fairly deſcribing his perfections.

When Henry offered Cranmer the Archbiſhoprick of Canterbury, upon Wareham's death he deſired to be excuſed from accepting it; and continued in the refuſal of it for more than ſix months; but the King was determined, and would take no denial; and finding his principal objection was the taking the cuſtomary oath of obedience to the Pope, at the conſecration, he permitted him to take it upon what conditions, and in what manner he thought proper; whereupon he made a proteſtation, that, by obedience to the Pope, he only meant ſuch as was conſiſtent with the laws of God, the ſtatutes of the Realm, and the prerogatives of the King; that he did not intend, by this oath, to bind himſelf from freely ſpeaking, conſulting, and conſenting to all and every thing which concerned the Reformation of the Chriſtian Religion, and the Government of the Church of England, or from ordering or reforming thoſe things in it, which ſeemed to him moſt proper to be reformed; and that he took this oath in this ſenſe, and no other. This is the ſubſtance of the

the Proteſtation or Explication of the oath, taken from Fuller's Church-Hiſtory; where he ſays, that Cranmer publickly made it three ſeveral times, in the Chapter-Houſe, before authentic witneſſes, on his knees, at the High-altar, at his conſecration; and alſo when he received his pall, at the ſame place. Now, if it be conſidered, that the King was not to be denied, when he inſiſted upon Cranmer's acceptance of this preferment; and that theſe were very natural limitations, and ſeemingly implied in the oath, I cannot ſee how he could be charged with any clandeſtine equivocation, or mental reſervation, contrary to the plain meaning of the oath; or with what juſtice one of our beſt Hiſtorians could obſerve upon it, that this was by no means one of Cranmer's moſt commendable actions. Mr. Phillips, indeed, confidently aſſerts, that he retired into a private place, and entered a Proteſt againſt the oath he was going to take, and then took it; though he ſaw this refuted at large by Fuller, whom he quotes juſt afterwards upon this very charge. B. ii. p. 154.

I wiſh I could ſay as much in Cranmer's defence, concerning the execution of Joan Bocher, and George Van Parr, a German, who

ſuffered as Anabaptiſts for Hereſy; though theſe Sectaries were very turbulent and factious in the State, and great allowances ought to be made for the violence of the times, yet it did not become a Proteſtant Biſhop to be concerned in ſuch proſecutions, and the Papiſts indeed availed themſelves mightily of it; and though theſe were the only inſtances of perſecution in this reign, and theſe were perſons whom the Romaniſts would have firſt fell upon, yet they made as much clamour about them as if they had been Martyrs in their own Church, or if as many had been burnt in this reign as were in the next. Mr. Phillips in particular ſays, that the Archbiſhop's behaviour on this occaſion was attended with an aggravation which creates horror, becauſe he urged the King to ſign the warrant; though had Gardiner, or Bonner, or any of his Romiſh Biſhops done the ſame thing againſt theſe very perſons, whom they looked upon as much Hereticks as Cranmer could do, it would have created no horror, and they would have done no more, in his account, than their duty required them to do. It is to be obſerved farther, ſays this Author, theſe proceedings were carried

carried on three years after the ſtatutes againſt Hereticks were repealed. B. ii. p. 153.

The ſtatutes againſt Hereticks of the fifth of Richard II. and the ſecond of Henry V, with that of Henry VIII. commonly called the Bloody-ſtatute, were indeed repealed by the firſt of Edward VI. but it doth not appear, that the famous ſtatute *de Heretico comburendo*, paſſed in the ſecond of Henry IV. was then repealed; and Rapin expreſsly aſſerts that it ſtood unrepealed till the year 1677. See Rapin's Hiſt. of the reign of Henry IV. P. 491. Folio Edition.

The ſentence likewiſe, ſays Mr. Phillips, was pronounced with all the pomp in which ſeverity and oſtentation could dreſs it up. P. 153. That is, it was much in the ſame manner as was given in the preceding reign, and with a leſs inſulting air than was generally uſed in the ſucceeding reign; but this Author's prejudice to the Archbiſhop ſets his actions in a far different light to him, and draws ſuch unguarded expreſſions from him as might be retorted upon him, and the perſecutors among the Papiſts with infinite advantage.

Peter Martyr, the Divinity Profeſſor at Oxford, retired in the beginning of Queen Mary's

reign to the Archbiſhop's Palace, to ſcreen himſelf from the inſults of the Papiſts; but finding that Cranmer was not able to protect himſelf, he, with ſome hundred Proteſtants, withdrew out of the Kingdom, foreſeeing the impending ſtorm; and indeed it appears, at this diſtance of time, a weakneſs in Cranmer, that he did not accompany them, and ſeek protection among his wife's relations, and the Lutherans abroad, that he might avoid the fury of Mary and her zealots, as Pole had before done, to get out of the reach of Henry VIII. and Becket, of Henry II. for he could not but be ſenſible, that as he had been the chief promoter of the Reformation in England, he was moſt obnoxious to the Papiſts: And though the Queen in Council had declared, that ſhe would uſe no force upon conſcience in affairs of Religion, and that none ſhould be compelled to embrace the Catholic Religion; yet one would imagine, that he having ſo many years experience and obſervation of the temper and equivocations of the Papiſts, could not but know, there was no truſting to their promiſes; that his innocence would but inflame their malice; and that he could expect nothing but the extremeſt inſolence and ſeverity from

from them. It is ſurprizing, therefore, that he did not make a timely and prudent retreat from them.

The ductile conſcience of Cranmer, ſays our Biographer, allowed him, in hopes of ſaving his life, to abjure all the tenets he had hitherto profeſſed; and when that proſpect failed, and he was brought to execution, to revoke that very abjuration, and to declare it was all a lie. B. ii. p. 157. It is acknowledged, that, in hopes of ſaving himſelf from being burnt alive, he did recant; and as the Queen had not thought proper to have him executed for giving his vote for excluding her from the throne, and the Statute *de Heretico comburendo* was only to be inflicted upon obſtinate Hereticks, he flattered himſelf with the hopes of being delivered from this fiery trial; but he ſoon found his miſtake, and as ſoon repented of what he had done; and to prove the ſincerity of his repentance, he expoſed his right hand, which had ſigned the recantation, to the flames, and held it extended in the fire till it dropped off. This is the charge againſt Archbiſhop Cranmer; and to which we ſhall only farther reply, that he was a human Being, and as ſuch was ſubject to human frailties, and let him who

is free from them fling the firſt ſtone: And if all his accuſers who were leſs innocent than himſelf had, like thoſe of the adulterous women mentioned in the Goſpel, withdrawn themſelves, he would have been left to God and his own conſcience: but inſtead of that, they, without the leaſt ſenſe of their own infirmities, or compaſſion for his, baited him with infamous ſcurrilities, and dragged him to a moſt barbarous death: and his enemies ſince have continued to blacken his character with the fouleſt calumnies, among whom none have appeared more forward than our Author, who hath given vent to his rancour, by collecting and loading him with all kinds of ſcandals, ſome of which are abſolutely falſe, and others only relatively bad, that is, what might give offence to a Papiſt, but would be approved by every Proteſtant and impartial perſon.

Dr. Fuller, ſays this Biographer, who has undertaken Cranmer's defence, is at a loſs how to reply to any of the nine articles which Mr. Prinne lays to his charge; moſt of which he gives up, and ſays, in a homely phraſe, he will leave him where he is guilty to ſink or ſwim by himſelf. B. ii. p. 158. Here I cannot but obſerve, that the more accurately our Author's

Hiſtory

Hiſtory be examined, the greater number of prevarications and falſhoods will be found in it; and he hath ſo little regard to truth or decency, that there is hardly a ſingle Author, or the leaſt paſſage mentioned by him, that he doth not miſquote, or wreſt from its meaning to a ſenſe favourable to his own cauſe. Fuller hath amply refuted ſeven out of the nine articles that Prinne had drawn up againſt him; he is entirely ſilent upon one, and of the other he only ſays that he leaves him to ſink or ſwim where he was guilty; but Mr. Phillips here inſinuates, that he had ſaid this of him in general, upon all the articles; and though Fuller, in his anſwer to one of them, proved that Cranmer had taken the oath of obedience to the Pope in the moſt public manner, and particularized the places where he took it, yet Mr. Phillips, without the leaſt refutation or notice of it, confidently aſſerts, that Fuller was at a loſs how to reply to any of theſe nine Articles, and wilfully perſiſts in charging Cranmer with retiring into a private place, and there entering a proteſt againſt the oath.

LETTER XXXI.

PHILLIPS charges Cranmer with conſenting to the death of Lambert and Anne Aſkew, who were executed for denying the Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation. Buller, indeed, acknowledges this conſent, but I cannot ſee for what reaſon, as it is not authenticated by any Hiſtorian that I can meet with. Henry had diſputed with Lambert upon that ſubject, and ordered him to be burnt, or retract his opinion: and Chancellor Wriotheſley proſecuted Aſkew and put her to the rack. It is generally ſaid alſo, that he demeaned himſelf ſo low as to ſet his hand to the rack, and to ſkrew it tighter when he thought the Executioner favoured her, and then ordered her to be burnt; but it no where appears that Cranmer's advice or conſent was aſked upon either of them.

Our Author upbraids him likewiſe, but without any authority, with ſubſcribing to the ſix articles, commonly called the Bloody Statute. Cranmer had been Archbiſhop ſome years before it was enacted, and he argued ſtrenuouſly againſt it for three days ſucceſſively; and when the King deſired him to go out of the Houſe of Peers, and deſiſt from oppoſing it, he had the

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courage to ſay, that it was againſt his conſcience, and he thought himſelf obliged to ſtay and vote againſt it. It was not likely, therefore, that he ſhould ſubſcribe to it.

Again, he ſays, his conſcience, (that is Cranmer's) in a very different Senſe from that of the Apoſtle, became all to all, and accommodated itſelf without diſtinction, to every thing.—This perſon, who, Proteus like, put on all appearances, was then only taken when he returned to his own form. B. ii. p. 156, 157.

He never appeared in any other form than that of a Reformer, he ſet out with that character, continued invariably, except in the ſingle inſtance of his recantation, and died in it: When the Duke of Norfolk, Gardiner, and others, had plotted his ruin, and accuſed him to the King of being an Heretick, and the King charged him with it, he frankly acknowledged and avowed his principles. Henry was charmed with his ſincerity, and had a real affection for him, becauſe he was convinced that he had acted with ingenuity, and from motives of conſcience, and therefore always protected him from his enemies: The Papiſts knew him to be what he was, and were not deceived in him; he was not taken when he returned to his own form, for he was always in it; but he was then only taken, when the Papiſts re-

turned to the plenitude of their power, and their ſpirit of perſecution was armed with the ſword of the Magiſtrate, and they could bring their plots to bear againſt him, which they had been contriving for more than twenty years.

Our Author's charge is admitted, that Cranmer ſubjected (but not enſlaved) the Church to the Secular Power, and ſubmitted its authority to earthly Potentates; that he acknowledged Henry VIII. to be ſupreme Head of the Church in theſe kingdoms, ſuffered Cromwell, as the King's Vicegerent, to preſide at all Convocations of the Clergy; that he diſſolved two of Henry's marriages, and on Edward's acceſſion to the throne, took out freſh grants for his Archbiſhoprick; and that he alſo took to himſelf a wife, and accepted one of the firſt Sees in the Chriſtian World: But it doth not follow from it, that he was obliged to Celibacy by the moſt ſolemn ties. How far he conformed to the Rules and Canons of the Romiſh Church in Henry's Reign, and when he was Archbiſhop, is very uncertain: But it is preſumed, from his general character, that he did no more than what he could juſtify. Theſe things indeed are ſuch high crimes in the opinion of the Romaniſts, that I wonder how ſo zealous a Member of that Communion, as our Author ſeems to be, ſhould repreſent his conſcience only as ſpotted like a leopard,

a leopard, and not, Æthiopian-like, blackened all over. But however he may appear to him and to his party, he will ever be honoured as a Saint and a Martyr by the Proteſtants, for he was at the head of the Reformation, indefatigable in the promotion of its intereſt, and voluntarily expoſed himſelf for its ſake to the hatred, malice, and outrages of the furious Bigots of the Romiſh Church: He was reſpected and loved by the King for his integrity, and honoured by all impartial and good men for his ſanctity of manners, learning, gravity, and innumerable excellencies of mind: and as his candour, generoſity, hoſpitality, and other moral qualities, gained him univerſal eſteem, ſo his zeal for the Chriſtian Religion, his inceſſant labours for reſtoring it to its primitive purity, and his courage in his Martyrdom, rendered him the hero of the Proteſtant Church.

The Duke of Somerſet was a Reformer, and conſequently falls under the cenſure of our Author, whom he characterizes in the following manner. The young Prince's uncle was inveſted with the whole power of the Regency: But the diſcontents which the changes in Religion, of which he was known to be the principal Abettor, and the inſolence and rapacity, with which he exerted an almoſt ſovereign ſway, cauſed the people to riſe up in arms in different places of the

kingdom. And again, this haughty Uſurper of the Royal Authority had left his nephew juſt as much of it as was neceſſary, to enable himſelf to exert it to its full extent; whom I cannot diſmiſs without obſerving that an adminiſtration only of a few years was long enough to make the nation experience that woe which is denounced againſt a land whoſe King is a child, and whoſe Nobles are luxurious: B. i. p. 447, 448. As this charge is founded upon no facts, or upon facts which will not ſupport it, ſuch as the building of Somerſet houſe upon the ruins of Religious houſes, and the proſecution of his brother, I ſhall make no other reply than by oppoſing to it the character which is given of him by Fuller, and other reputable Hiſtorians.

The Duke of Somerſet, ſays he, was religious, and a lover of all ſuch as were ſo; a great promoter of the Reformation, valiant, and beloved of martial men. Fuller's Church Hiſt. B. vii. Sec. 45.

He loſt his life for a ſmall crime, and that upon a nice Point ſubtlely deviſed, and packed by his enemies. Cambden's Brit. in Somerſetſhire.

To which it will be ſufficient to add, what Rapin hath extracted from Burnet, Dugdale, and Heylin concerning him, viz. He was humble, affable, civil, courteous, and guided in all the tranſactions

tranſactions of his life, by the principles of honour, virtue, and religion; in a word, he had many noble qualities, and few faults; he always ſhewed a very great zeal for the Reformation; and to him and Cranmer is properly due the glory of every thing that was done in favour of Religion during the reign of Edward VI. Rapin's Hiſt. vol. ii. fol. edit. p. 14.

The laſt character that I ſhall examine, and with which I ſhall conclude theſe Remarks upon the Hiſtory of the Life of Cardinal Pole, will be of Ann Bullen, the Mother of Queen Elizabeth.

Ann Bullen, ſays our Author, had been educated at the Court of France, which was then a ſchool of gallantry, and had returned to England a great proficient in it.—She had imbibed the doctrine of Calvin; and the Broachers of thoſe Novelties had found no readier method of ſpreading them, than by inſinuating themſelves into the good opinion of the Ladies about the Court: But on her coming to England, ſhe ſecretly favoured the tenets of Luther, and indeed the latitude which the Patriarch of that ſect allowed his followers, could not but appear very commodious to the general tenor of her life. As ambition was her ruling, though not her only paſſion, that had ſcarcely gained its end, when other inclinations, of a leſs ſpiritual nature, began to ſollicit their proper gratification,

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and make her overlook the dangers with which ſhe was threatened from his temper, who had put away a lawful wife to make room for her. Some writers have aſſerted, that like Agrippina, who provoked her own ſon to inceſt, with a view to ſecure her power, when ſhe perceived the unweildy habit of the King's body to be but ill ſuited to his impatience of having a male heir, ſhe judged her brother's vigour moſt proper to ſecure this tye of her huſband's affections, without any riſk of diſcovery.

Her fate was conſidered not merely as a puniſhment, but as a divine judgment, when ſhe finiſhed a life of levity, error, and lewdneſs. B. i. p. 123, 124. And in his note upon this laſt ſentence he ſays, that Stowe, Fuller, Burnet, Collier, Echard, and our Hiſtorians in general ſeem to agree in this character of Ann Bullen. Sanders adds more and Gratiani confirms all.

It is indeed univerſally agreed, that Ann Bullen favoured the Reformers: but every one of theſe authors whom this Biographer hath the audacity to produce againſt her, vindicate her moral character, with reſpect to the crimes here laid to her charge, except the two Roman Catholick writers, Sanders and Gratiani; the firſt of whom is ſo notoriouſly ſcandalous, that I wonder Phillips himſelf is not aſhamed to mention him. The King had conceived a violent paſſion for Jane Seymour, a Maid

Maid of Honour to the Queen, and from thence was prepared to liſten to the baſe inſinuations of Lady Rochford, who hated her Huſband, and had a moſt infamous character. This wicked woman whiſpered into the King's ear, that his Queen was unfaithful to him, and had a criminal converſe with her Huſband, the Lord Rochford, though he was the Queen's brother. The King being inclined to believe theſe ſuggeſtions, the Queen's enemies, on account of Religion, finding it a favourable opportunity, backed this charge, with accuſing her of ſeveral intrigues with her domeſticks. The King's paſſion for his new miſtreſs enflamed his jealouſy, which burnt with unextinguiſhable fury. Four perſons, beſides Lord Rochford, were apprehended, convicted, and executed, without any proof or evidence, for criminal familiarities with the Queen: All of them proteſted their innocency, only Smeton ſaid he had well deſerved to die, which gave occaſion to many reflections; but it was generally ſaid, and as generally believed, that he was bribed to ſay thus much; and had his life promiſed him; but he was never brought to confront the Queen upon her trial, for it was feared he would retract what he had ſaid; and therefore he was executed leſt he ſhould tell tales. Burnet, vol. i. p. 201. vol. iii. p. 120. and Rapin, vol. i. Folio, p. 810.

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The King married Jane Seymour the day after the Queen's death, which plainly ſhewed his eagerneſs to get rid of Ann Bullen; and what confirmed the world ſtill more in the belief of her innocence was, the fatal end of Lady Rochford, her principal accuſer, who was condemned and executed for introducing one Culpeper into Queen Catharine's bed-chamber, and being an accomplice of her lewd practices.

I will cloſe this head with the ſhort character of Ann Bullen, taken from Fuller, one of the Hiſtorians, who Mr. Phillips ſays agree with him in his deſcription of her; viz. She was accompliſhed with an acceptable behaviour to all qualities and conditions of people: She was a great patroneſs of the Proteſtants; protector of the perſecuted; preferrer of men of merit; a bountiful reliever of the Poor; and the happy mother of Queen Elizabeth. Fuller's Church Hiſtory, B. v. Sec. 20.

THE END.